

The Honor Program: Road to a Rehabilitative Prison System

The Steering Committee for the Honor Program

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

As prisoners in a maximum-security prison and participants in the Honor Program, this project, created by prisoners, is for the sole purpose of creating healing, enhancing safety, and increasing the likelihood of positive change for everyone: the community, prisoners, taxpayers, guards and administrators; even those who would argue against it.

We believe, and in fact have proven, that it is possible for those with the least freedom and resources to make positive, transformative change for ourselves and others. This is our attempt to do just that. We believe that the only thing necessary for good to prevail is for each of us to give up having a hard heart, to desire what is right, and to do what we can. To this end, we ask for your consideration and support.

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Fast Facts and Information on California Prisons

- California has the largest, most expensive correctional system in the nation, and it is filled to twice its intended capacity.
- With more than 174, 000 inmates in 33 adult prisons, the state's annual correctional spending, including jails and probation, amounts to \$8.92 billion.
- With the worst recidivism rate in the country, California's crowded prisons are filled with parolees who churn in and out of the system. Two out of three incoming inmates are parolees. Only 1 in 5 parolees completes his or her parole term without going back.

Of the approximately 120,000 inmates released annually, about 70% of them are back behind bars within 24 months – nearly twice the national average. Worse yet, about 10% of these prisoners will repeatedly return – six or more times over a seven-year period, according to one study. No other state reports such a high inmate-churn rate.

- The 120,000 parolees who are released into our neighborhoods each year have endured the extreme trauma of the prison experience and years of exposure to other “hardened” criminals. (If an individual was not “hardened” before he went into prison, he certainly is when he gets out (see recidivism rate)).
- The enormous recidivism rate directly affects the two most important areas of concern for our communities and for the state of California: safety for our children, families, and businesses, and a huge tax and financial burden.
- California prisons are so overcrowded it has forced more than 17,000 inmates into gymnasium and classroom housing, a dangerous alternative that puts both guards and prisoners at risk.
- Studies show that California inmates are less likely than their counterparts in other states to receive any sort of educational or vocational training while incarcerated.

Fast Facts and Information on the Honor Program

“Can anything be done...? The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation can do some things on its own. It could allow inmates wanting and able to enroll in rehab programs to be housed together. It could better identify and train officers to run the programs. And it could work to lessen the hostility between management and prison guards, thereby motivating officers to help conduct rehab programs.”

--Professor Joan Petersilia, *Understanding California Corrections*

- The Honor Program, created in 2000 by prisoners and non-custody staff with the desire to lower violence, crime, racism, and drug use, has proven to be very effective. It is located on Facility-A (which houses about 600 men) at the Level IV maximum security California State Prison, Los Angeles County (CSP-LAC)
- Prisoners must apply to participate in the program. They are screened, must have a clean record, and must state a desire to commit to more demanding criteria, including abstaining from violence, racism, gang involvement, and drug use. (Random drug testing is part of the program.)
- The Honor Program requires each prisoner to create an “Individual Development Plan” to achieve self-improvement goals. Prisoners agree to take responsibility for their own personal growth and transformation, and are involved in programs or activities that address emotional, psychological, social and/or vocational health.
- The Honor Program allows prisoners to have a choice between the negative group punishment model or personal responsibility and individual accountability. It clearly separates those who really want to change and improve.
- The Honor Program has demonstrated the desire of prisoners to help others, to give back to the community, and to make amends for past wrongdoings. Tens of thousands of dollars has been raised for, and thousands of contributions have been made by, Honor Program prisoners to non-profit organizations, Toys for Tots and similar groups, the poor around the world by eyeglasses refurbishing programs, and many other areas of help for the needy.
- In its first year of operation The Honor Program at CSP-LAC:
 - Saved the taxpayers of California over \$200,000
 - Reduced weapons offenses by 88% and violence by 85%
 - In its six years of operation, the Honor Program has functioned without a single major violent incident, with savings of millions of dollars to the state of

California.

- With greater official support, so much more is possible through the Honor Program. Many positive opportunities have been dashed as a result of a lack of desire to explore safe, workable, and economically sensible options.
- The Honor Program must be made a part of the California Code of Regulations, Title 15, to insure its long-term success. Thank you for your support and consideration.

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THE HONOR PROGRAM: ROAD TO A REHABILITATIVE PRISON SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

California Prisons in Crisis

The California prison system is in a state of deep and genuine crisis. The facts are distressing and require no embellishment: the worst recidivism rate in the nation; terrible overcrowding and increasing rates of violence and suicide, with widespread riots and disorder; multiple court orders compelling systemic change in the medical, dental, mental health, and disabilities services provisions, with several federal judges threatening to assume complete control of the entire system; an exploding budget; and a cadre of leaders under investigation for a whole panoply of crimes and abuses. It is, in fact, an eight billion dollar catastrophe that directly impacts hundreds of thousands of the most vulnerable of our fellow citizens; actually, every Californian is negatively affected by our failed prison system.

It will take a number of major changes to clean up this mess, but one thing is certain: Rehabilitation cannot occur in the midst of turmoil. And the rehabilitation of prisoners must be the foundation of everything that happens in a prison system; otherwise the prisons degenerate into warehouses of suffering and pointless separation. In other words, they become just like *our* prisons.

A fundamental piece of the solution to the prison crisis already exists: The Honor Program at the California State Prison-Los Angeles County (CSP-LAC) on Facility-A. This innovative program has functioned for six years on a maximum-security (Level-IV) yard, with very little official support, without a single mass incident, without a single serious injury to staff, and with tremendously reduced rates of violence and disorder. A fully laid-out and tested Operational Procedure has been developed with an unrealized potential to effect transformational change to the entire prison system.

Experience on Facility-A demonstrates that disciplinary infractions drop off almost immediately upon implementation of the Honor Program. Five categories of disciplinary infractions, totaled for the pre-Honor Program period compared to 18 months of the post-implementation period (beginning in January 2001), showed the dramatic decreases noted below in Table 1. The Honor Program saved the CDCR \$205,075 in 2001 alone for administrative staff time for the processing of disciplinary infractions. (See Appendix A, the *Honor Program Progress Report*, for more detailed statistics.¹)

¹ Statistics regarding the cost savings for the California State Prison-Los Angeles County Honor Program were compiled by W. Burgess, CC-II, at the direction of then-Warden Ernie Roe.

Table 1: Reductions in Disciplinary Actions After Honor Program Implementation

Weapons Offenses	88% Decrease
Violence/Threatening	85% Decrease
Work-Related Offenses	84% Decrease
Drug-Related/Trafficking	43% Decrease
Alcohol	41% Decrease

The Honor Program revolves around four basic principles: The use of direct experience to inform the program; positive reinforcement; personal accountability; and raised expectations. Prisoners must make a voluntary commitment to conduct themselves in an honorable fashion, against the status quo of the prison culture. This simple step has resulted in enormous and substantial changes that continue today despite official indifference, at least, and outright hostility much of the time. The Honor Program threatens those special interests that have prospered off the misery and suffering of the prison system. Consequently, the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR) appears unwilling or unable to institutionalize the successful reforms embodied in the Honor Program and, sadly, has resisted official implementation of this effective rehabilitation program. In fact, the CDCR has openly stated its intention to end the Honor Program in favor of still more punitive, expensive, and useless retributive programs.

The Real Costs

The CDCR costs more than eight billion dollars a year in operating expenses.² With the recently proposed expansion, this will balloon to more than \$10 billion in the next two years, at least, and within a decade will hit around \$20 billion.³ This is real money that won't be spent on schools or health care or infrastructure improvements. More to the point, and ironically, this is money that won't be used to make the kinds of investments in society that could result in less incarceration and crime.

But these costs, substantial though they are, are a tiny down payment on the real, long-term costs to the taxpayers, to our children and their children. Looking down the road, the burden already incurred is closer to \$100 billion dollars in retirement and health care to pay off already negotiated contracts to state employees.⁴ Unless the unprecedented expansion of the prison system is checked, these hidden costs will ultimately consume California's ability to provide necessary services; again, ensuring the continued growth of the factors that lead to crime and imprisonment.

² California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (www.cdcr.ca.gov)

³ This figure is based on an extrapolation, utilizing the per inmate cost structure identified by the CDCR multiplied by the additional beds sought for construction by the Governor and the Secretary of the CDCR.

⁴ "Understanding California Corrections," page 24, table 2, by Joan Petersilia, California Policy Research Center. Numbers derived by multiplying the number of correctional staff by 25 years of retirement by current salary structure and retirement benefit.

The reasons for this exponential growth are many, but at least three can be addressed by the Honor Program. First, the rise of parole failure as more and more prisoners are released after being subjected to the violent and traumatizing horror of our dysfunctional prison system. A good example is the so-called technical parole violation rate. In 1981 this stood at about 7% of all parolees; today it is more than 36%, a five-fold increase.⁵ In real numbers, this means 35,000 more prisoners, right now, incarcerated at a cost of around \$1.3 billion annually, or about \$25 billion in long-term costs.⁶ (For reference, California imprisons more technical parole violators than all the rest of the country, combined.⁷)

Second, the growth in the incarceration rate, which went from 119 per 100,000 in 1981, to 456 per 100,000 in 2005.⁸ At the 1981 level (with roughly the same crime rate, by the way) this would mean 131,000 fewer prisoners. This adds up to \$4.5 billion less annual costs, and long term costs reduced by \$50-\$75 billion;⁹ our children's burden reduced by real, significant amounts.

Third, the total failure rate of parolees has grown from about 22% to 62% a year; from a little more than one in five parolees returning to prison to almost two out of three returning to prison each year.¹⁰ This is the engine that drives the numbers, translating into hundreds of billions in long term costs placed squarely on the shoulders of our children because we failed to reform a clearly failed prison system. There is no rational excuse for this. The simple facts are obvious: the political system has failed; the judicial system has failed; and the prison system has failed, miserably. The Honor Program offers a start at real rehabilitation, which must occur to reverse this depressing slide. Compare the high costs to society of the long term balloon payments coming, added to the costs of welfare, social services, unemployment, and incarceration (which all too often trickle down to the children of prisoners) with the benefits of rehabilitation: employment and tax paying, participation in the consumer society, the children of rehabilitated prisoners becoming employed and educated and paying taxes. The negative multiplier effect of failure transformed into a positive multiplier effect of success. Of course, less concrete but no less profound costs are also incurred by our society as a direct result of the prison system's exponential growth. The gang culture, too often spawned in prison and certainly intensified by the current system, has laid waste whole communities. The perverse appeal of prison to a whole generation of youngsters trapped in poverty and despair, and the failure of government to effectively intervene, can be traced right back to the gates of the prisons as they swallow up hope along with all those billions of dollars.

Similarly, the poisoning of our political process by the prison special interests – the guards' union, the materiel suppliers, and the builders – has wreaked havoc on our state's ability to deal with crime and punishment in a rational way. Instead, the narrow interests of these politically powerful groups – through the misuse of the taxpayer's own money – have paralyzed the process.

⁵ CDCR, Offender Information Services, Estimates and Statistical Analysis Section, Data Analysis Unit, September 2005 report.

⁶ CDCR Home Page (www.cdcr.ca.gov)

⁷ "Back to the Community: Safe and Sound Parole Practices" Little Hoover Commission, November 2003

⁸ CDCR, Offender Information Services, Estimates and Statistical Analysis Section, Data Analysis Unit, September 2005 report.

⁹ This figure is based on an extrapolation, utilizing the per inmate cost structure identified by the CDCR, multiplied by the reduced number of inmates if the incarceration rate had remained at the 1981 level. (See also "Back to the Community: Safe and Sound Parole Practices," Little Hoover Commission)

¹⁰ CDCR, Offender Information Services, Estimates and Statistical Analysis Section, Data Analysis Unit, September 2005 report.

The all too effective campaign to vilify and dehumanize prisoners, waged by proxy groups of the special interests, has shifted the debate from what is possible to nothing is possible, to we must endlessly build more prisons, hire more guards, incur ever greater costs, and condemn whole populations to failure.

It is a system not in the best interests of the majority; it is a form of social extortion by a small group who has managed to purchase the debate.

Make the Change Now

Now is the time to move for real change with a proven model. The Honor Program works because it has been designed and refined by prisoners and by other parties who desire to make a positive difference. To not seize this moment of opportunity, when the will to change is the strongest in a generation, is to take the cowardly way out and pass this problem on to our children.

We cannot build our way out of the prison crisis. We already incarcerate far too many of our fellow citizens for far too long, and the massive costs incurred will eventually paralyze our state government. We cannot rely on the status quo. The current system has failed us, utterly and completely. We cannot continue to rely on the insiders of the prison system as they have too much vested in this failed system to see alternatives and better ways. It is time to break down the reigning paradigm and rebuild our prison system so that success is the expected and achieved result.

If the political leaders of California do not step up to this challenge, the Honor Program will disappear into the vortex of the CDCR. Those determined to prevent reform will have succeeded at destroying what they fear most: Positive change.

I challenge all who read this to do what is so obviously the right thing. Do it because repairing a system that hurts so many ought to be fixed. Do it because the vast costs coming down the road are simply unacceptable. Do it because hope and positive energy should be supported. Whatever your rationale, become a vocal and insistent supporter of the Honor Program. Join with us to change the prison system into a functioning, rehabilitative, and socially useful government entity. The time, truly, is now.

HISTORY AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE HONOR PROGRAM AT THE CALIFORNIA STATE PRISON – LOS ANGELES COUNTY (CSP-LAC)

The Honor Program concept developed out of the chaos of the California prison system in the late '90s. Riots were widespread and there was a growing desire to find a way out of the corner into which prisons had been driven by shortsighted prison management policies dictated by narrow political agendas. Throughout the system, many staff and prisoners were looking for a better way.

The Honor Program on Facility-A was proposed in 1999 by the author of this manual, a life-term prisoner, who has served 27 continuous years in the state prison system. A veteran Correctional Lieutenant took the initial proposal and presented it to then-Warden Ernie Roe. It was further developed by the Catholic Chaplain, holder of a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Southern California.

In the first two years of active local administrative support, the Honor Program encouraged a flowering of positive projects, almost all of which were initiated and led by prisoners. Some of the more notable that continue today include:

Artists Serving Humanity (ASH), a group which donates its time and energy to creating works of art that are auctioned, with the proceeds donated to local community charities, 10 percent being returned to the art supply warehouse account for the purchase of new art materials. ASH maintains an active roster of 15 accomplished artists, who, as part of their duties, provide art instruction to fellow prisoners. ASH was established in its present form as an Inmate Leisure Time Activity Group (ILTAG) in May of 2003 under the auspices of Arts in Corrections, which oversees its functioning, organizes and promotes the art auctions, and administers the acquisition and distribution of art supplies. Since its establishment as an ILTAG, 50 prisoners have participated in the program as artists, 75 additional prisoners have been directly monitored and trained by these artists, 300 paintings have been produced for auction, and over \$50,000 has been raised for local nonprofits. ASH has received numerous commendations from the local community and has been featured in the Antelope Valley Press and the Los Angeles Times.

Coastline Community College Program (CCCP). CCCP is part of the Coastline Community College Incarcerated Student Education Program. Through this program, tuition fees are waived while prisoners pay for all books and materials. In 2005, five prisoners were enrolled and one has since earned an Associate of Arts degree. Currently, 25 prisoners are enrolled. The Education Department sponsors CCCP, and an ILTAG is being formed at this time.

Convicts Reaching Out to People (CROP). CROP is a diversion program with the purpose of preventing at-risk youth from making the life-altering choices and bad decisions that ultimately lead to prison or death. It works with Visions of Hope, a community based nonprofit that cooperates with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, County Probation and other local law enforcement. At-risk youth are brought in groups of 35 on a tour of California State Prison-Los Angeles County. They then participate in a presentation by 25 CROP prisoners, who explain firsthand the underlying factors which contributed to the crimes they committed, ending with a message about decision making, respect, and responsibility. Since its inception in January of 2001, CROP has had 92 prisoner participants and organized 22 sessions with 770 at-risk youth. CROP has been featured in the L.A. Times, L.A. Daily News, A.V. Press, and the A.V. Lifestyles Magazine, among others.

Its contributions have been highlighted on Los Angeles TV channels 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13. Many letters of appreciation and encouragement have been received from parents, state officials, and domestic violence prevention and youth intervention organizations because of CROP's impact on the young participants.

Creating a Healing Society Program (CHSP). CHSP provides training courses designed to increase awareness of the effects of trauma on individuals and society. It fosters empathy and a sense of responsibility and it promotes participation in valuable community work. CHSP is sponsored and conducted by staffers of The Catalyst Foundation. It began in August 2004 and, to date, 300 prisoners have completed a one-session awareness seminar and more than 25 have completed an in-depth 12-session course. The Catalyst Foundation also sponsors the annual Art and Gourmet Show in the local community in support of the goals of ASH. CHSP has been featured on KPFK, a Los Angeles radio station, and has been covered in the A.V. Press.

Eyeglass Refurbishing Program (ERP). ERP refurbishes eyeglasses for indigent people around the world. It works with Lion's Club International and their eyeglass recycling program – Lions in Sight. Lions in Sight collects used eyeglasses in the western United States and, once refurbished, distributes them to indigent people around the world. The Lion's Club provides lensometers and training for prisoners, who wash, classify, repair, label, and box the eyeglasses for Lions in Sight. Since ERP was established in April of 2003, 140,000 refurbished eyeglasses have been processed for shipment. Additionally, with the approval of the Lion's Club, ERP has also assisted in eyeglass repair and replacement for indigent prisoners. ERP has been recognized for its important contribution by Insights, the international newsletter of Lions in Sight, featured in the A.V. Press, and on local TV channel 3.

League Play (LP). LP is an ongoing sports organization for the Honor Program. All teams are ethnically integrated. Recreation leagues include: softball, which has had the greatest success, with six teams of 15 participants each (which is more than 15% of the Honor Program participating); basketball, with eight teams of eight participants; and soccer, with six teams of six participants. Tournaments, which are held on a monthly basis (especially on holidays) also include volleyball, handball, horseshoes, and track and field. Also notable are the organization of the events, and the support of the rest of the program participants as fans and spectators. LP symbolizes the success of the Honor Program in creating a culture of acceptance, cooperation, and mutual support.

Life Skills Workshop. This workshop was designed to train Individual Development Plan (IDP) Guides to assist other prisoners in conceptualizing and redacting their IDP's. This workshop, directed by staff with Education and Psychology degrees, is organized over a period of 10 consecutive weeks, and requires a considerable investment of time in study and practical exercises. The training assists the participants not only in formulating their own Plan, but also in the development of a conceptual framework that can serve as a guide for assisting others in the elaboration of their individual Plans. Since the authorization of IDP Guide positions in April 2003, 18 prisoners have successfully completed this rigorous workshop.

Men for Sobriety (MFS). MFS is a non-theistic alternative to traditional substance abuse treatment programs such as A.A. and N.A. MFS was formed as an ILTAG in March 2005 by prisoners who practice the Buddhist tradition, in cooperation with the Men for Sobriety organization, which provides guidelines and oversight of the prisoner who functions as group moderator.

MFS has the steady participation of 12 prisoners.

Men Utilizing Sounds to Incorporate Collaboration (MUSIC). MUSIC is an ILTAG, sponsored by Arts in Corrections, which provides a cooperative setting for musical expression and learning. Since its inception in 2004, MUSIC has included over 100 participants, organized in two groups of 12, with a rotation of participants each trimester. MUSIC provides 10 performances per year on the yard for special occasions.

Self-Development Program (SDP). SDP is a peer-to-peer program which facilitates the achievement of educational and life goals by focusing the talents of individual prisoners for the improvement of others. SDP was formed as an ILTAG in July 2002 and is sponsored by the Education Department. Sessions take place on a weekly basis with approximately 25 participants. Over 250 prisoners have participated, in some form, since the program's inception. Under the auspices of SDP the following activities are currently organized:

- Elementary Spanish: Classes for beginners;
- Critical Thinking: Strategies of learning, complex problem solving, logic and psychology, personal critique and analysis;
- Creative Writing: Writing skills, grammar, format, dramatic techniques, personal journaling, manuscript submission. Four participants in this course have had articles published;
- Life Group: Self-help group that provides support in achieving educational and other life goals.

The SDP is a perfect example of the ethos of the Honor Program. Prisoners, without staff teachers present, teach classes. There have been no negative incidents in these fully ethnically integrated classes. It is proof positive of the talent and energy waiting to be tapped.

As impressive as these accomplishments are, particularly in light of the vanishing level of support, so much more almost happened. The groundwork was laid (including written Operational Procedures and Departmental Operations Manual supplements, physical infrastructure improvements, and community contacts) for two additional exceptional programs.

The first, a tree-seedling program, actually was implemented before guards' union and negative administration elements' resistance resulted in termination of the program. Had it been fully activated, Honor Program participants would have been tending thousands of inches-high tree seedlings for planting in burn areas throughout the Antelope Valley. This project perfectly fit the Honor Program ideal of utilizing the prisoner population's desire to assist the local community. It worked to meet the twin goals of developing the prisoners into an asset to the community and of developing the prisoners themselves into better, more compassionate human beings through the proven practice of good works.

The second, a service-dog training program, never made it beyond the development of procedures, contacts, and the construction of a dog-run area before, once again, guards' union and negative elements of the administration resistance to positive programming ended the program. Had it been allowed to proceed (and it is germane to note that similar in-cell dog training programs are operating successfully around the country) Honor Program participants would have been training dogs to aid disabled people in Southern California. The program would have saved these all-volunteer groups large amounts of money and manpower by using volunteer prisoners.

The benefits to society are manifest, but the benefits to the prisoner population, the trainers and all the others on the yard, would have been astonishing. Prisoners would have been training dogs on the yard, walking them around and taking them to their work assignments; the overall effect would have been nothing short of magic.

WHY THE HONOR PROGRAM CONCEPT WORKS

The Honor Program has compiled a remarkable record of success over the past six years, even in the face of official indifference, at least, and for the past several years, outright hostility. During that time there have been no riots, no mass actions (work stoppages, sit-down strikes, etc.), and no staff seriously injured; overall levels of violence have decreased dramatically. All of this is particularly noteworthy in light of the distressing facts of California prisons over the same time frame. Every Level-IV and most of the Level-III's have experienced vastly greater levels of violence and unrest, and this includes the Sensitive Needs Yards. The reality of the prison experience in this state is one of horrific violence and fear, which renders everyone associated with the prisons victims of acute and chronic trauma.

In short, the prisons take in traumatized and troubled people and make them worse before releasing them back out to society. The prisons also employ many thousands of people, all part of family and social networks that are similarly harmed.

The distinction between the Honor Program and normal prison experience can be broken down into several components: Utilization of direct experience to inform the course of a systematic approach; positive reinforcement over the purely negative approach of the prison system; personal accountability over the normal group punishment approach; and the reintroduction of raised expectations into the prison environment.

The fundamental operating principle of twelve-step groups is the valuation of direct experience over the professional, top-down approach to systems. In the context of the Honor Program, the experiences of prisoners have informed the design of the program from the initial proposal through implementation. It is this reliance on direct experience that is the linchpin of the success of the program.

Flowing out of this direct experience model is the use of positive-reinforcement to shape the conduct of prisoners. Throughout the Department, at every level, officially and unofficially, negative-reinforcement is the almost exclusive tactic employed to manage prisoners. Years of experience have taught that this rarely succeeds, but is rather an ideology-based approach rooted in the "get tough" mentality. This is not to say that rules should not be enforced or standards upheld, as they clearly must be; nevertheless, positive behavior should be rewarded and, thus, reinforced.

In the Honor Program system, to the degree feasible, each prisoner should be held accountable for his own conduct. Within the CDCR, group punishment is the normal response to most all serious misconduct. The result of group punishment is doubly negative - it builds the solidarity of negative prisoner groupings, and it separates the prisoner from having to accept the consequences of his own actions. Further, the group punishment approach allows the worst elements to dictate the direction of the program for the rest of the population. From a psychological standpoint, group punishment places a prisoner in a completely helpless position, held accountable for actions not his own; this is particularly traumatizing and thoroughly counterproductive.

Finally, and perhaps most important to the successful transformation of the prison environment, the Honor Program reintroduces raised expectations; the program brings hope back into the lives of prisoners. No sentient being can long survive without some sense that their condition could improve, even in some undefined future. The current policies of the CDCR work together to extinguish hope. These dashed hopes are responded to with primal despair as prisoners lash out against each other, against staff, and, ultimately for too many, against society. It is in no-one's best interest to break prisoners down to lives of hopeless suffering.

The Honor Program, by formally seeking to improve the condition of prisoners, by working to create opportunities for meaningful and useful work and service, brings hope back into prisoners' lives.

All of these together create an environment wholly different from that of the average prison yard in this state. Sadly, those who have benefited from the status quo resist it, but they can be won over by strong leadership.

In the six year history of the Honor Program at CSP-LAC, more than one early doubter came to become a later supporter of the program. Managers from other prisons, observing the relaxed atmosphere of the yard, have commented how hard this transformed reality was to believe. Perhaps, as the expected set of parameters for how prison operates in California has degenerated over the years, it is this fantastical quality that provokes the naysayers.

The important thing to remember, though, when observing and considering the Honor Program's altered reality, is that the program was not created ex nihilo. It is the product of hundreds of years of collective prison experience, bound together by the motivation to build something that works inside of a malfunctioning and failed system. It is, at its heart, an act of faith in the better angels of our nature. That it works, and it most certainly does work, is an affirmation in the basic humanity of prisoners - something to feel hopeful about, to be sure.

The Global Vision

The Honor Program offers to the entire prison system a broad vision and roadmap to change and reform. The principles employed and tested successfully on Facility-A can be exported to EVERY other prison in this state; what has been accomplished could eventually transform the prison experience for the hundreds of thousands of Californians who cycle through the system.

Transforming Prison into a Healing Community

The sad irony of prison is that while it is a terribly traumatic experience as currently operated, it ought to be an effective environment to heal individuals. Prison should be a healing community out of which emerge men and women better able to function and contribute to society.

It is also a sad fact that other states, as well as other industrialized countries, achieve lower recidivism rates. The canard that holds California prisoners are a particularly evil species of miscreant simply gets the source of our failure backwards. California's prisons and its prison system are particularly poorly managed, poorly focused, and poorly operated.

Instead of directing resources into activities that would result in healing, our state builds an ever-bigger arsenal of sticks to bash people into line. Instead of treatment and therapy, our state pushes prisoners into deeper holes, separating them from their families and society.

Instead of encouraging positive, useful behavior, our prison system reinforces the worst behavior with a failed model of correctional management.

Support, acceptance, and encouragement of growth towards resolution characterize healing communities. Before healing can occur, however, an overall environment of stability and safety has to exist. It is this foundational element that the Honor Program provides, and it is this quality, above all others, that the Honor Program can uniquely create in the mad, violent, and damaging world of California prisons.

Ending the Negative Cycle of Recidivism, Violence, and Death by Prison

The philosophy underlying the “get tough on prisoners” model deployed for the past 25 years held that by making prison a terrible experience, prisoners would stop re-offending. This is a classic example of the professional, top-down style of program implementation - any prisoner worth his state-issued boots could have told the authorities these policies would, instead, create an angry mass of highly resistant convicts. The proof of this fallacy is the highest-in-the-nation recidivism rates, as punitive deterrence did not prevent prisoners from returning for another dose of punishment.

The model that sees no possibility for growth or healing in the time served in prison, the control/restraint model of corrections, has to be discarded. It is a miserable failure, and it has not succeeded in achieving even its acknowledged small goals. To change the dismal reality of prison, a new paradigm has to be erected, one that sees the prison term as the start of a process toward healing and restoration.

The Honor Program sees the prison term as an opportunity to instill a worldview in the prisoner that promotes healing and growth. The Honor Program provides a platform for the interaction between the community and the mass of prisoners, which will afford both ends of this dyad a chance to engage in mutually beneficial programs. The Honor Program is the venue to end the systematic destruction of life’s potential and create in its place a prison system that produces men and women ready to rejoin the free world.

THE FORCES AND PHILOSOPHIES THAT WILL RESIST THE HONOR PROGRAM

The “Peacekeeper” Culture

In every prison in California, the guards right up to the administrators utilize certain prisoners to influence the goings on. They are euphemistically referred to as "peacekeepers." Point of fact, they are almost always gang leaders, drug dealers, and negative elements of the prisoner population. This is so because the guards have been trained to reward those who utilize the same tactics the guards themselves routinely deploy to maintain some semblance of order - violence, coercion, and bribery. For an Honor Program to work, this practice must be ended, completely and permanently. (Of course, for the prison system as a whole to work successfully, this practice should end, regardless.)

The “peacekeeper” culture exists for several reasons. On a superficial level, it makes some sense to reward those who are willing to do the dirty work of enforcement when force is the overriding principle of management. The guards, as a whole, have adopted the position that force and violence are inevitable in our prisons - nothing can be done to stop it. Looked at through this warped prism, it is reasonable to make common cause with the most violent and try to direct the violence away from yourself.

But, as recent realities on the ground have shown, this approach tends to result in still more violence and unrest. Worse, assuming the goal truly is to bring about rehabilitation, the results of the “peacekeeper” culture - violence and chaos - vitiates any hope of achieving the goal. The fact is, rehabilitation cannot occur in the midst of turmoil and unrest.

At a more fundamental level, and more disturbingly, the “peacekeeper” culture is brutal and ugly evidence of the sad state of this system. The endorsement of gangs and drugs, and the expectation and even welcome acceptance of violence, is the reality of prison. The guards have become their hated enemy, the object of their revulsion - they have become the worst kind of prisoner. One sees this in everything from the lingo to the dress to the mannerisms.

It is an unsettling revelation to see how deep and widespread the phenomenon has become. I have had conversations with captains and lieutenants, seemingly rational people otherwise, who aver that the absence of violence on a prison yard is unnatural. They are quite sincere, if also quite mad.

To defeat the "peacekeeper" culture will require a concerted, long-term effort by the most senior officials of the Department. In the context of operating an Honor Program, every effort must be made to refuse the use of "peacekeepers." Staff must be rewarded for breaking out of this concept and working with prisoners who display a positive approach to dealing with the rigors of prison life. It is a sad truth that California prisons have devolved into chaos, often fueled by gangs/"peacekeepers," and it is sadder still that much of this could have been avoided through a positive approach to the problems. Instead, the system essentially threw its collective hands in the air and surrendered to the worst elements - they chose to take the easy road instead of the correct road.

Drugs/Alcohol

Drugs and alcohol, and the consequent problems associated with their use, stand at the front of the line of what must be fixed within the prison system. The approach taken for the past quarter-century, which is almost solely punitive, has utterly failed, by any measure.

In the case of drugs, the idea has been to punish users, try to catch dealers, and spend almost no time on treatment. Prisoners use drugs for the same reasons most everyone else does - unresolved issues, pain and unhappiness, and for recreation. Prison is often an alternating experience of long periods of boredom and brief moments of stark terror, with a constant, uncontrollable level of stress underneath. Getting high or drunk is an escape from this unremitting reality.

To combat drugs requires a complete revamping of rules and regulations, of philosophies, and of allocation of time, funds, and energy. Treatment must become easy to obtain and only voluntary - compulsory drug treatment rarely, if ever, results in less drug use. The smart approach would be to incentivize participation in treatment, which would result in a more motivated group. Creating an environment that is more stable, less boring, and less dangerous will result in less abuse of mind-altering substances.

In the context of operating an Honor Program, with its set of regulations and higher expectations, there must be a consistent and fairly applied effort to drive down demand. Absent draconian rules, there really is no way to directly control supply.

Demand can be controlled, which will result in a diminished supply of drugs. Random, rigorous, and regular urinalysis is the key to controlling drugs and alcohol. Dirty tests, or the discovery of drunkenness or alcohol, must result in quick removal from the program.

On Facility-A, when there was a more serious commitment to the Honor Program, drug and alcohol control was vigorously enforced. This caused an astonishing turn of events - the yard became, more and more, clean and sober. This higher level of sobriety is absolutely essential to the flowering of the "good works" aspect of the program. And the "good works" aspect is the key to the general transformation of prisoners in the Honor Program, the key to changing lives for the better while helping society.

Staff Difficulties

Any discussion of actual reform to the California prison system, for it to be serious and complete, has to address the realities of the staff, both custody and non-custody. During the "get tough" years there developed a culture of "do nothing" that has come to pervade the entire system. Worse, for a smaller percentage of staff, there is also an active resistance to work that hides behind the get tough mantra, as if performing the tasks these employees are paid for would constitute that greatest of sins, "being weak on inmates." Worst of all, an admittedly very small percentage of staff are actually corrupt - thieves, drug dealers, violence instigators and provocateurs.

Having said this, it is important to note that along with these bad apples there has always been a percentage of staff who have refused to allow themselves to sink down into the muck. These individuals also are found at every level, custody and non-custody, and without them no progress could ever have been made.

The Honor Program concept directly counters the most negative staff in several ways. First, and clearly foremost, the program stops the chaos behind which laziness, incompetence, and corruption hide.

It is a given that there are also staff who will actively promote violence and chaos because it advances the "toughest beat in the state" rhetoric of the guards' union. Similarly, many of those hired, ostensibly, to teach and counsel and tend to our medical and dental needs, utilize the storm of troubles as a perverse shelter from performing their duties. The endless lockdowns that are the normal program at most all of the Level-IV's and many of the Level-III's, as well, serve mostly to stall out any kind of program and provide the necessary cover to those staff who really don't want to work.

The Honor Program also tends to expose incompetence and venal pettiness, both of which are found all too often in the prison setting. The levels of inability to perform even the simplest tasks are simply astounding. "Training," such as it is, often amounts to little more than playing crosswords or copying simplistic answers off a helpfully provided master sheet. And venal pettiness, the kind of base, mean-spiritedness found everywhere in the prison system, is exposed for what it is when there is no cover of terrible security issues demanding that everything be done slowly, haltingly, and reluctantly.

Perhaps the most surprising development of the Honor Program at CSP-LAC was this hostility exposed. The guards and frontline supervisors, in particular, openly resented the loss of "downtime" (lockdowns) and the fact they were expected to treat the prisoners with something approaching professionalism. I suspect this will be an ongoing problem, to one degree or another.

Accountability

In order to increase the likelihood of success, the issue of accountability has to be addressed. The finding of every major review of the CDCR has noted the almost complete lack of accountability throughout the prison system. Generally these studies have focused on labor/management issues like sick leave and overtime abuse, but, for the purposes of this manual, a deeper and more fundamental kind of failure to hold to account will be discussed.

For more than 20 years the Department has pursued a wide variety of policies, almost exclusively punitive in nature, enforced under the catchall rubric of "safety and security." This extends from inside the prisons to parolee supervision issues and informs the entire structure of the system.

The basic flaw in this has been the lack of follow-up to measure, in an objective and rational way, the effectiveness of the policies. This has resulted in the promulgation of thousands of rules and regulations dictating, in minute and painstaking detail, every facet of the life of prisoners and employees, regardless of whether these rules accomplish any good.

All the while this tidal wave of rules-making has been occurring, the reality of success has diminished - an ever-growing recidivism rate, higher than the national average murder and suicide rates in prison, exploding costs, rampant corruption, federal court intervention, and widespread riots and chaos in most of the prisons. All of this is well documented and has been reported in the media extensively.

The fundamental question not being asked is a simple and devastating one: Why has no one been held accountable for this massive and total failure? And clearly, no one has been held accountable; of this there can be no real debate. The leadership of the Department consists of the same basic group who have been in charge for the past 20 years. At no point in the expanding disaster of the prison system has there been a mass culling of the bosses, something that must occur before any reform will be taken seriously.

Accountability must begin at the top and be pursued down the chain of command to the line staff. It must expand outward from custody staff to all areas of operations, including medical, education, and support staff. A new ethic of expected success has to replace the current ethic of planned failure.

The tired excuse that California prisoners are somehow especially evil and are immune to the kinds of programs and treatment that work elsewhere has to be rejected as the bunkum it is. As the success of the Honor Program at CSP-LAC has shown, with a tiny modification from wholly negative to slightly positive reinforcement, immense changes can happen.

The Negative Culture of Prison

The culture of prison, the way people interact and view the world around them, is one of negativity. The staff generally view their job as one of pointlessly caging up animals until they are released to pillage and plunder society once again. Prisoners see themselves as hapless victims of outrageous fortune completely out of their control. There is a sense, held by virtually everyone, that nothing good can come out of the prison experience. Perhaps nowhere is this more clearly highlighted than in the prevalence of "scared straight" type of programs. In these admittedly well-intentioned operations, prisoners utilize what they assume is their only trump card - the horror and misery of their lives as prisoners - to attempt to steer youngsters away from a life of crime and incarceration.

The theme of these organized harangues is always once you go to prison your life is rendered meaningless and void. (I was the de facto chairman of the S.E.E.K. Program, a version of "scared straight," at the California Correctional Institution in Tehachapi; I know of what I speak.)

A couple of decades of constant battering by the media, endless demagoguery by pandering politicians, and appeals to vengeance masked as "victim's rights" have permeated the very conscience of the prisons themselves, deep into the marrow of concrete and steel. Staff promotions have been based, in large part, on the willingness and ability to inflict pain and suffering on the prisoner population. This concept is so deeply ingrained that the laws were changed to prevent anyone who wasn't a guard from becoming a warden. While having been a guard should not disqualify someone from being a warden, this mandate works only to disqualify other professionals, and closes the circle of wagons around this dysfunctional world.

Among prisoners, a crushing ennui pervades every moment of life, from waking into a world of pointless suffering to falling asleep dreading the coming of morning. The result of this, for the vast majority of prisoners, is the assumption of a kind of living death, with all the expected stages of grieving. Unfortunately, most get stuck at anger and act out against the obvious and visible manifestations of their predicament - the prison itself.

Coupling this deep sense of sadness with the active hostility of staff produces the culture of negativity in prison. At its basest level, it means prisoners are always expected to be liars and, all too often, they are. It means doctors who don't believe prisoners deserve medical treatment, assuming all prisoners are malingerers; so many prisoners assume the malingerer role. It means teachers who don't believe prisoners are entitled to an education, and the consequent prevalence of prisoners who are disdainful of learning. It means mental health professionals who loathe their patients to the point of openly mocking them, and prisoners who fabricate mental illness to acquire mind altering medications to escape their terrible reality.

This negative culture also means a constant stream of mean-spirited and degrading actions taken by the prison system against prisoners. From the loss of visiting privileges, to the loss of weights, to arbitrary and overly restrictive property limitations, this war against prisoners continues right up to this moment. Forcing men to wear clothing with large, bright orange lettering spelling out their shame, "CDC PRISONER," is an act only someone filled with hate could have conceived. Similarly, restricting the numbers of books, or demanding that only the most primitive of typewriters be allowed, are the actions of administrators who both fear and despise their charges.

The only rationale for all of these policies is to turn the screws on prisoners, to inflict pain because you can. These are the actions of bullies, of thugs, not professionals.

The epitome of the negative culture of the prison system is the growing use and acceptance of the lockdown as a management tool. In the lockdown all but the most basic (food) is halted. No classes, no religious services, no betterment programs are possible. Stemming from the super-max approach to prison - the permanent lockdown of thousands of men deemed irredeemable - the lockdown program has grown to swallow up all of the Level-IV's and most of the Level-III's. It cannot be stressed with enough emphasis: The lockdown stifles all forward progress, stymies all positive efforts, and deepens the levels of depression, rage, and recalcitrance of prisoners. The lockdown is the equivalent of throwing one's hands up in the air and storming off the field in a huff.

For reference, the Honor Program yard at CSP-LAC, without a single mass incident of violence, was more than one-third locked down during the year 2006. At most of the Level-IV's the reality is less than one-third *not* locked down. Just as rehabilitation cannot occur in the midst of chaos, it cannot occur during lockdowns. All the more reason to establish Honor Programs throughout the prisons.

Call to Action

Over the past several years, one commission after another, one court after another, one media exposé after another, have all come to the same conclusion - the CDCR is a broken system that needs elemental reform before it can perform its true function, protecting the people of California.

Incarcerating vast numbers of people in violent, traumatizing conditions does not protect the public. In fact, this results in the opposite reality, as more than 120,000 parolees are released every year, poorly equipped to succeed in society. It is not shocking to anyone who has served time in this state that more than two-thirds of parolees are ultimately returned to prison. Rehabilitation cannot occur in the midst of chaos and disorder.

This is a simple fact. Yes, overcrowding is terrible and it does impede positive programming. However, overcrowding, in and of itself, is not the basic problem. This prison system was just as unsuccessful before triple-bunking and dayroom beds. It is, rather, the negative, anti-programming policies of the CDCR that have to be reformed. Without reform, no matter the population or the number of bad beds, failure will continue to result in tens of thousands of battered, ill-prepared parolees. There must be a smarter, more cost-effective way to run a prison system.

There is. The Honor Program will lead the prison system to abandon its destructive, failed policies in favor of a proven, positive approach to corrections. The Honor Program provides the foundation for all the other vital reforms necessary to end the bleeding and begin to actually rehabilitate prisoners. Drug treatment, mental health counseling, education and vocational training - none can occur when the prisoners are locked in their cells after the latest riot or similar disturbance. Rehabilitation can only happen when the chaos is ended. The prison system's reliance on the big stick approach will not work, just as it hasn't worked for the past generation.

Sadly, the big stick is all the administrators and managers seem to know. Off camera, away from scrutiny, rehabilitation is openly derided. There is a form of institutional self-fulfilling prophecy in the CDCR that expects failure and is always correct in this assumption because no real effort is put into success. It is on account of this negativity and unwillingness to alter course that the Honor Program remains unsanctioned and unsupported.

The Honor Program must be codified and made a permanent part of the CDCR's program responsibilities, not subject to the whims of administrators who don't grasp the significance of the program, or the machinations of guards' union operatives who fear the wider ramifications of program success. The Honor Program must be made a formal part of the California Code of Regulations, Title 15, to insure its long-term success. The situation is too dire to delay any longer.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT AND OPERATE AN HONOR PROGRAM

The following is a simplified set of instructions on how to establish and operate an Honor Program in any multi-facility institution throughout the CDCR. It is also a series of observations on how this can work, and what can impede it from working to its full potential. The program will reduce violence and costs, and it will provide a place to begin the process of rehabilitation necessary to alter the failure rate of California's prison system. It will require, in addition to the physical and status changes advocated, a similar transformation in the thinking of administrators, managers, supervisors, line custody staff, and all others within the system. This will not be easy for employees who achieved professional and financial success by proving how much they hate their charges. It must begin with the leadership admitting their failure and acknowledging that a new path must be followed to fulfill the mandate of prisons: To enhance public safety through the application of sound correctional management principles, resulting in the release of ex-offenders better able to succeed and contribute to society. Perhaps even more fundamentally, these leaders need to acknowledge that this is an achievable goal: *Because it is.*

PREPARATION

Rules Changes

For the benefit of policymakers, the following is a brief technical discussion of how to institute changes through the complicated rules revision process.

The adoption of a new Administrative Determinant “HON” will be announced (15 CCR §3375.2(b)(12)) that references the Honor Program criteria, which will be placed into the California Code of Regulations, Title 15, Crime Prevention and Corrections, Division 3, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), Chapter 1, Rules and Regulations of Adult Operations and Programs, at 15 CCR §3375.1(c). Also, an Administrative Bulletin will be promulgated, setting forth the methods to effectuate this program change, directing the Classification Services Unit to begin identifying qualified prisoners for the initial four (4) yards and creating a waiting list for future transfers.

Identify Prisons/Yards

This should include, potentially, all of the modern, post-Solano, multi-facility, celled 270° units of both Level-IV and Level-III designation. From a logistical perspective, it makes sense to begin with an initial commitment to at least two (2) Level-IV and two (2) Level-III facilities, one for both northern and southern California, totaling four (4) yards with a population of approximately 4,000 prisoners, or just about 2.3% of the CDCR. Once identified, each of the four (4) facilities should begin screening the resident populations for Honor Program eligibility.

Screening with Integrity

Concurrent with the screening process taking place at the designated facilities, fliers will be sent out to all Level-IV and Level-III prisoners and staff, announcing the activation of Honor Program facilities and setting forth the criterion to be used in the selection process.

All institutions will create a list of qualified candidates. Classification Services Representatives will screen Central Files to determine appropriate placement on a centralized master list maintained by the Classification Services Unit in headquarters.

It is vital that this list be created and maintained with complete integrity. In other words, the common practice of rewarding prisoners, either for negative reasons or personal proclivities, must be eliminated from the process of creating the list of Honor Program candidates. If special factors need to be considered in individual cases, it must be done above-board and be well documented. The early success of the program on Facility-A was largely the result of an extraordinarily courageous and virtuous counseling supervisor’s unwillingness to play the “homie hook-up” game.

The Signed Commitment

At the conclusion of the list-making process, all candidates must sign a witnessed CDC-128-B Chrono that states the following:

This CDC-128-B will serve as an application, statement of commitment and recommendation for Inmate X, CDCR# X, to the Honor Program. The honor attitude required by the program is reflected in the following statement:

I have realistically evaluated the restraints and limitations of prison life and I have decided to attain certain goals during my prison time — things I will be proud to have achieved. So, I choose to cooperate in the promotion and maintenance of a human environment in which the attainment of these goals is possible for myself and others, and I have decided to be personally responsible for using the available opportunities to achieve my goals.

Per 15 CCR §3290(c)(2), drug testing shall be conducted “When mandatory random testing is known to the inmate to be a condition for the inmate’s participation in a specific program, assignment, or activity.” An initial drug test and random drug testing thereafter is a condition for participation in the Honor Program.

My signature on this chrono assures that I am willing to participate in all facets of the Honor Program and commit myself to improve myself and the Program. (See attached sample Operational Procedure.)

This act is more than a simple formality; it is another step in the process of developing a different consciousness in the minds and hearts of the prisoners involved. In everyone in our culture there is a solemnity and seriousness associated with the act of signing a document. It is a contract between the prisoner and the Department to which both sides should be held accountable.

Staff Training

At this early stage the process of staff training must begin to insure as much cooperation as possible. Perhaps the greatest mistake made in the activation of the original Honor Program at CSP-LAC was the failure to include custody staff to a sufficient degree to allay their fears of losing control. This failure resulted in considerable resistance to the program and even some measure of sabotage. Had the staff been brought into the process early on, it is likely much of the negative backlash could have been avoided. Minimally, this early involvement in the process will void the argument that staff were not offered an opportunity to voice their concerns and provide input. Nevertheless, line staff cannot be given a blank-check type of veto power over the program.

The Union

To the extent possible, in light of on-the-ground realities of the CDCR, the guards’ union must be brought on board and made a part of the process. While it may be feasible to activate Honor Program facilities without the union’s support, it would be near to impossible to implement the program with the union’s active opposition.

Conversely, as the Facility-A experience also demonstrated, some staff will rise to the challenge of change and excel. Several line staff have continued to seek to bring more positive energy into the program, sometimes in the face of stiff opposition from their peers. Unfortunately, there did not exist a way to reward these positive lights. It should be written into the program to recognize those staff who embrace the Honor Program, both to recognize their individual courage and to motivate others to act similarly.

OPERATIONS

To effectuate the Honor Program, a set of operating principles must be established, even beyond the nuts and bolts of basic prison management. Because the program is outside the normal parameters of prison operations in this state, it is necessary to spell these principles out. These four core principles are: the ratio of positive reinforcement to controls; the seriousness of the program; the need to truly differentiate the Honor Program facility from other facilities of an institution; and the procedures for removing a non-participant from an Honor Program.

The 2:1 Ratio

Rewards should outnumber controls by a significant ratio - at least two to one, although quantifying is difficult, at best. Simply put, the tenor of the facility should be one of encouragement and positive energy. Just as the past decades of negative energy and pointlessly punitive policies have fed on themselves, swallowing up possibility, positivity will also work to spur further positivity.

The past generation of prison policies have been exclusively negative and punitive. Constant restrictions on everything from visiting to property to correspondence have driven in a sense of hopeless despair. Out of this despair has sprung the terrible violence and chaos that characterizes the reality of prison. Men and women bereft of hope, of any concrete reason to comply with the rigors of incarceration, simply won't. Rehabilitation can't be forced and it can't occur in a violent atmosphere. This is why rehabilitation hasn't succeeded, to the paltry degree it has been attempted. Trying to teach someone how to live a more productive and rational life in the midst of a riot is ludicrous and impossible.

Seriousness of Program

The experience of Facility-A taught many lessons, chief among which was the notion that if the Honor Program is not taken seriously, it becomes increasingly difficult to keep the program on-track. The program must matter to staff and managers.

For the Honor Program to succeed, upper-level administrators must consider the needs and concerns of the program, and concepts like rehabilitation and restoration must not be treated with open contempt and scorn.

For too long, the system has operated prisons as little more than warehouses into which the failures of modern society are dumped. This outlook dominates the thinking of the vast majority of staff at all levels. From this perspective, any effort to reform is a waste of time and resources. If the CDCR is to fulfill its mandate to protect the public, then rehabilitation must become a reality, and the idea of "doing" rehabilitation must be accorded serious weight.

Differentiate from Other Facilities

In line with this idea of taking the Honor Program seriously, there arises the issue of distinguishing the Honor Program facility from the other facilities at an institution. Experience has shown that while the Honor Program facility may function extremely well, the other facilities still manage to derail the program.

Similarly, the CSP-LAC administration had a difficult time recognizing that rewarding the Honor Program facility was the appropriate thing to do in order to reinforce positive behavior. Too often, the objection was that incentivizing the Honor Program would be de facto punishing the other facilities. (Of course, this only came up regarding positive enhancements - negative controls were applied willy-nilly, without any "equal protection" concerns.)

To demonstrate commitment to reform and positive programming, which are essential to achieving the greatest number of buy-ins to the program, the prison system has to allow the actual differentiation of the Honor Program from other, nonfunctioning yards.

Removal from the Program

Any program will have some measure of failure, the Honor Program being no exception. There has to be in place a system to remove from the program those who have violated the rules, a method that is fair and as immune to corruption as possible. At the outset, it should be noted that the experience of Facility-A indicates that rules breaking will diminish dramatically in a relatively brief period of time - when it becomes clear that the rules will be fairly and consistently applied.

As the sample Operational Procedure states, and as experience has taught, drug and alcohol offenses, work-related offenses, and serious violence must result in immediate removal from the Honor Program. Anything short of this results in a slide to the kind of favoritism and unfairness found on most prison yards. Prisoners will realize, quickly, that choices in lifestyle have to be made. Most would rather live in a safe and productive environment and will stop using substances, start attending work and school assignments, and desist from engaging in violent conduct. The few who will not abide these simple rules for creating a sane and functioning community have to be removed.

All other rules infractions can be dealt with in a less rigid fashion, with the possibility of retention in the program pending a period of disciplinary-free behavior.

Again, as experience has shown, with a demonstration of consistent and serious application of the rules, infractions of even a minor nature will diminish markedly. At one point in the history of Facility-A, when the commitment to the program was still genuine, there were months with practically no rules violation reports generated. This is so radically different from any other Level-IV (General Population or Sensitive Needs Yard) as to be hard to even imagine.

Individual Development Plans

To fully function as a rehabilitative venture, a system has to be in place to determine the interests and needs of the participants. The Individual Development Plan (IDP) serves this purpose by providing the means to both work with each participant as a single entity and to determine the overall interests and needs of the mass of participants.

Just as it must be recognized that rehabilitation cannot take place in a violent and chaotic environment, it must also be recognized that rehabilitation cannot be compelled. The current emphasis on mandatory programs, particularly without any immediate benefit, is not workable - the reality on the ground proves this, as they have not worked. All programming must be voluntary. A system of rewards should be put into place to act as a recruitment device, but participation must be voluntary. This cannot be stressed too strongly. (This is not to say that standards should not be compulsory, rather that participation must be a choice made by each individual.)

The IDP allows classification staff to have a record of the specific programming goals of each participant. This idea of acknowledging the goals, of even expressing an interest in the goals of an individual prisoner, is so completely revolutionary in this world that it has rarely been done. With a few notable exceptions, staff have balked at this idea so severely that not a single formal "accommodation" has ever been granted to aid a participant in achieving a goal. In fact, virtually all staff at all levels, custody and non-custody alike, reject out-of-hand this concept of dealing with prisoners as individuals.

For the program to function effectively, every participant will be required to complete an IDP. (Highly motivated prisoners will be provided training to assist those less well-educated individuals; the IDP is not a test.) Senior classification staff will collate the information gathered to determine where the most interest lays. For instance, it may be that a large group of participants prefer art-based therapy. It would make sense to recruit a volunteer from the community interested in this type of work. (Alternatively, if a volunteer cannot be located, it should be considered using the talents of a motivated prisoner-artist; this has proved highly successful and useful on Facility-A.) Of course, not everyone's interests will be met, but showing an effort would go a long way to overcoming the hostility and mistrust of many prisoners.

The ultimate objective of learning the needs and goals of the participants, and of using this information, is to start the rehabilitative process. It is also to achieve an environment in which every prisoner is involved with something that will help them, and that they feel passionate about. A busy and engaged prison yard is a functioning prison yard.

ILTAG's/Good Works Groups

Consistent with this idea of achieving full participation, it is wise to promote the formation of "Inmate Leisure Time Activity Groups" (ILTAG's). Particular emphasis should be on the formation of ILTAG's whose purpose is to perform some worthy work to the benefit of society. The experience of Facility-A shows that there is indeed, a pent-up motivation to be useful that lies dormant in most prisoners who are forced to be preoccupied with their personal safety to the exclusion of all other concerns. Within a year of activation, numerous proposals were floated for everything from counseling at-risk youth to donating artwork to local charities, both of which are still in operation. Absent the unreasonable resistance of staff, it is entirely likely that more could have happened.

The sad truth is, though, that allowing prisoners to become involved in the community through good works is perceived by many staff as a threat to their propagandistic public message. It is difficult to maintain that prisoners are all psychopathically violent and unmanageable when these same prisoners are repairing bicycles for the local boys' club or building tilt-up framing for houses for the homeless. (These are but two of the many "good works" projects nixed by the institution.) This is another case where the needs of society have to be accorded priority over the parochial concerns of staff. This requires courageous leadership.

One of many ideas that remain to be implemented is to partner with a local nonprofit that would function as a kind of coordinating agency. In the communities surrounding the institutions throughout the state, there are tremendous needs unmet, often for lack of manpower. This central nonprofit could become more intimately involved, working with highly-motivated prisoners and putting needs and goals together for the benefit of all. Again, for this to be truly successful there will need to be courageous leadership - it is inevitable that a considerable percentage of line staff will resist these types of programs.

Continuing Staff Training

Because full implementation of the Honor Program shifts the prison so far from the expected norm of California, it becomes more vital to continue staff training as the program progresses. Line staff have come to view their jobs as basically punitive in nature, managing captured prisoners of the War on Crime. They often view their role as one of inflicting punishment on offenders on behalf of victims of crime. This has been going on for the past 20 years; it will not go away quickly.

A comprehensive training program must be instituted anywhere an Honor Program is established. This training will need to emphasize the manifold benefits of the program, both to themselves and to society. As every serious study has shown, prison itself is a damaging and traumatizing experience, to prisoners and staff alike. Regardless of their recalcitrance, staff can be won over to the Honor Program, as the experience of Facility-A showed. With a more serious commitment from managers and administrators, a greater number of line staff would have bought into the program. Continuing training, supported by a genuine commitment to the Honor Program, would certainly reap benefits to all concerned.

Ownership of the Program

For the Honor Program to fully succeed and realize all of the pent-up, frustrated energy currently lying dormant in the mud of the prison system, the participants, the staff, and the lawmakers of California need to assume ownership of the program. As things stand today, no one can feel a positive connection to what mostly transpires behind the electrified fences and gun towers that plague this state. Indeed, what connection there may be is one of fear and loathing, of separation akin to the old leper colony. Prison is seen only as a terrible place that serves to hold back a contagion. It is on account of this that the average citizen feels no compunction in describing prisoners, and by extension their families and friends, in the most vile terms. The Honor Program is the vehicle of reform necessary to reverse this tragic reality.

For the law abiding citizens and their representatives, the opportunity to see prisoners involved in good works of value to their own lives could be the needed icebreaker. People have every right to fear being victimized by predatory criminals. The problem comes about when the citizen never sees the reformed criminal working to contribute to society. The policies of the past 20 years have succeeded in sealing off the prisons and prisoners so effectively that the offender is forever seen as the crime. It would probably come as a shock to most people that prisoners almost invariably feel tremendous shame, guilt, and remorse for the actions leading up to their imprisonment.

My own experience, both individually dealing with my personal guilt, and observing the terrible remorse all around me, has convinced me that the desire to make amends, to whatever degree possible, is profound and genuine in many prisoners. The Honor Program provides the possibility to actualize this desire and do real good in the world.

For the staff of prisons, particularly the uniformed, custody staff, the cynicism about rehabilitation is deep and widespread. Too often, such programs are viewed as simply mollicoddling bad people. I suspect this stems from the constant barrage they, too, are forced to endure.

Their careers are viewed by society as little more than turnkeys who serve no vital, useful purpose beyond guarding the gates of Hades against the hordes held within. This can be seen in their often-desperate attempt to imbue their profession with significance. The sad truth is the policies pursued by the prison system have denigrated custody staff to guards, no matter how much they protest that old-fashioned label in favor of "correctional officer."

It is clear, though, that the guard would rather actually be correcting something; that is, doing something of real worth. I suspect they fear their efforts will come to naught, and they do not want to be tainted by the scarlet stain of their charges. The Honor Program, adopted as a permanent part of the prison system's efforts to bring about true reform, offers to the staff the great gift of doing meaningful work.

For the prisoners, the Honor Program offers a chance to live like a human being, away from an environment of fear and chaos, and with the real possibility of reconstituting their essential humanity. Perhaps it is this that irks the naysayers the most. The system, as it is currently constituted, denies virtually any chance for the prisoner to be considered a true human being. When dealing with a sub-species, a kind of vermin in pants, it is so much easier to exact brutal revenge, to squash out hopes and desires. Be assured that prisoners are acutely aware of their status as a lesser kind of being. We drag this self-imposed millstone around behind us; it is why we flail so violently and search out lakes into which we cast ourselves. The pain is overwhelming - the lives we have ruined, others and our own, the people we have let down, the damage our actions have caused which is, all too often, simply irreparable. The Honor Program cannot undo wrongs done; these are better left to authorities of a higher nature. Nevertheless, the program can allow for the chance to at least begin the process towards whatever redemption is possible.

Prisoners have been so thoroughly dehumanized, even in their own minds and hearts, that it will take great assurances from the prison system, from the leaders of this state, and, at some point one can hope, from the rest of society, for the great mass to buy into the restoration that is at the heart of the Honor Program's promise. But, when that happens, and given support it *will* happen, the great mass of prisoners can be redeemed and returned to their families and communities. They can re-enter the free world as better human beings than they left it. They can live the principles of the Honor Program; they can own up to their duty to make amends and make the world, all of our world, a better place. That is what the Honor Program promises.

WHO WRITES THIS

In 1998, while working as a custody clerk (something I had done in several prisons over a period of close to 20 years) the books I had been reading regarding correctional management and criminology, my experiences, and my reality began to gel. More and more, it became clear to me that the “problem” of California prisons had little to do with some kind of negative exceptionalism; rather, it was a system that was fundamentally broken.

As the Department of Corrections applied the politically motivated, harshly punitive policies of the “get tough” era, as education and vocational training were replaced by greater emphasis on super-max units and gang validation, as college programs were flushed in favor of property restrictions, as the entire prison system morphed from the place an offender was sent as punishment into a place to be punished daily, most everything worthwhile and humane was terminated. In fact, there developed an out-front attitude of paybacks. The guards, particularly as their influence grew, adopted a slash and burn policy, a win/lose paradigm where every loss of prisoners’ rights and opportunities was viewed as a win for their side. By the turn of the 21st century, up to today, the course of the prison system devolved into a bizarre war between the perceived interests of staff against prisoners. The sad result has been higher levels of violence and chaos, exploding costs, and, worst of all, ever diminishing success rates for parolees – it is a sad fact that California now leads the nation in most all the negative statistics related to prison.

I have watched all of this from a seat inside the ring. I have watched as seemingly every disastrous, misguided, and errant choice that could have been made has been made. It became obvious to me another approach was necessary, an approach that stressed personal responsibility and individual accountability – the opposite of the insane “group punishment” policy that serves only to empower the worst elements among the prison population and drive further into many prisoners the sense they are being treated unfairly. For the prison system to prepare men and women to re-enter society and become successful citizens, this sense of being treated wrongly must be addressed.

The best way to address this is to treat each individual according to his or her actions. Inculcating a sense of responsibility for one’s own actions is the basic building block upon which can be laid the additional elements of rehabilitation and restoration. This is what was underneath the initial proposal I wrote that became the Honor Program. Fundamentally, it is calling to account each according to his actions. When this happens, the entire dynamic of prison is transformed for the better.

My 27 years of experience in the California criminal justice system have taught me that personal accountability is the key to rehabilitation. The system, as it is currently set up, works against personal accountability and rewards group/gang behavior.

Until this dichotomy is resolved between what should be and what is, the system will continue to churn out failures who pose an existential threat to civil society.

It can be different; it must be different: for my children and your children. This is my effort to make the world a better place.

Kenneth E. Hartman, C-19449
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Lancaster, CA 93539-4430
www.prisonhonorprogram.org
prisonhonorprogram@hotmail.com

Appendix A:

Honor Program Progress Report

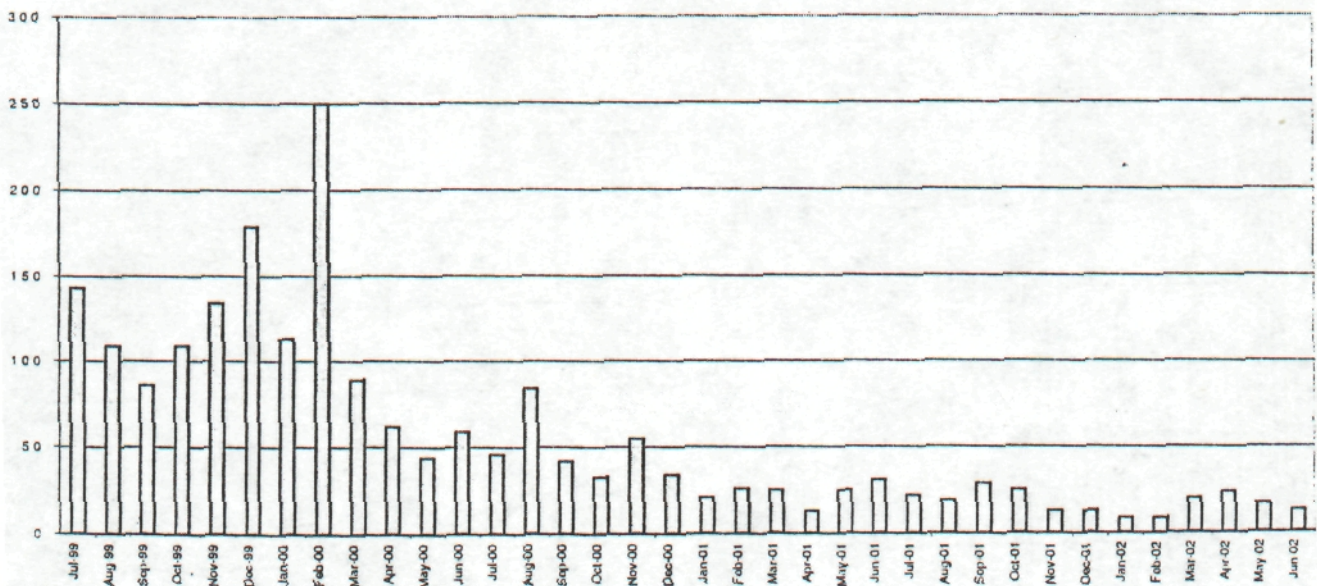
SUMMARY OF FACILITY-A DISCIPLINARY HISTORY JULY 1, 1999 - JUNE 30, 2002

Honor Yard Program Progress

The following is a brief summary of the disciplinary history of CSP-LAC Facility-A. This three (3) year period provides an equal set of time frames (18 months) prior to and after the full implementation of the Honor Yard Program on January 1, 2001.

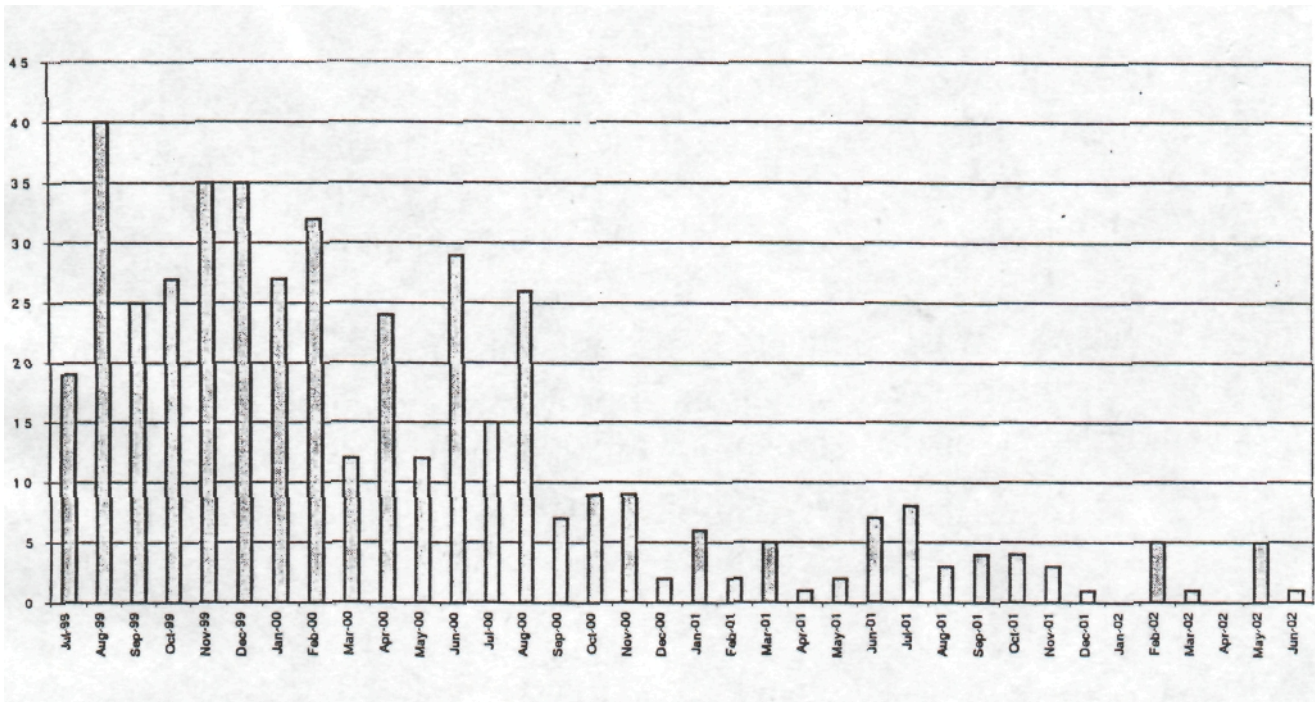
Analysis was conducted of relevant disciplinary logs and other related unit documentation. For accurate comparison during the months prior to Housing Unit #5 being activated as an Administrative Segregation Unit overflow, gross numbers have been pro-rated by a factor of .75 for that period for specific offenses.

Graph #1 represents the total number of disciplinary reports generated on the facility during each of the 36 monthly periods:

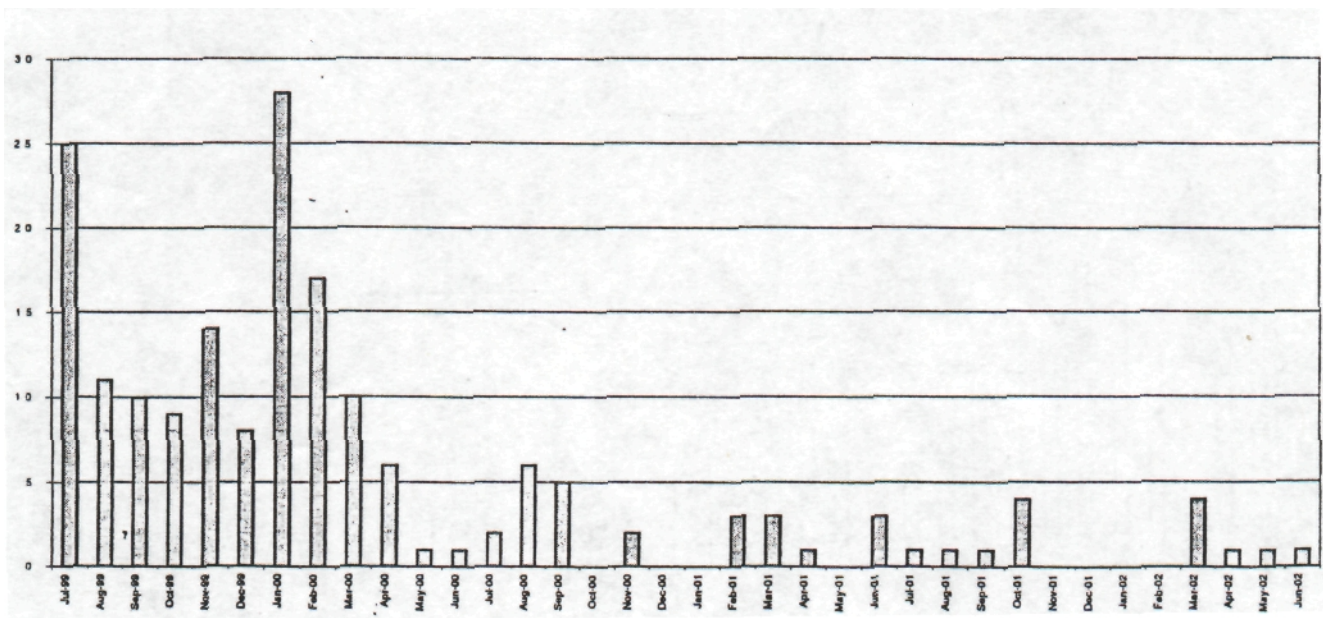


SUMMARY OF FACILITY-A DISCIPLINARY HISTORY PAGE 2

Graph #2 represents the pro-rated combined totals of disciplinarys with a guilty finding for violence, threatening violence and weapons possession:



Graph #3 reports the pro-rated total disciplinarys with a guilty finding for work-related infractions:



It should be noted that the following categories, totaled for the pre-Honor Yard period compared to the post-implementation period showed the noted decreases:

- Weapons Offenses 88% decrease
- Violence / Threatening 85% decrease
- Work-Related Offenses 84% decrease
- Drug-Related / Trafficking 43% decrease
- Alcohol 41% decrease

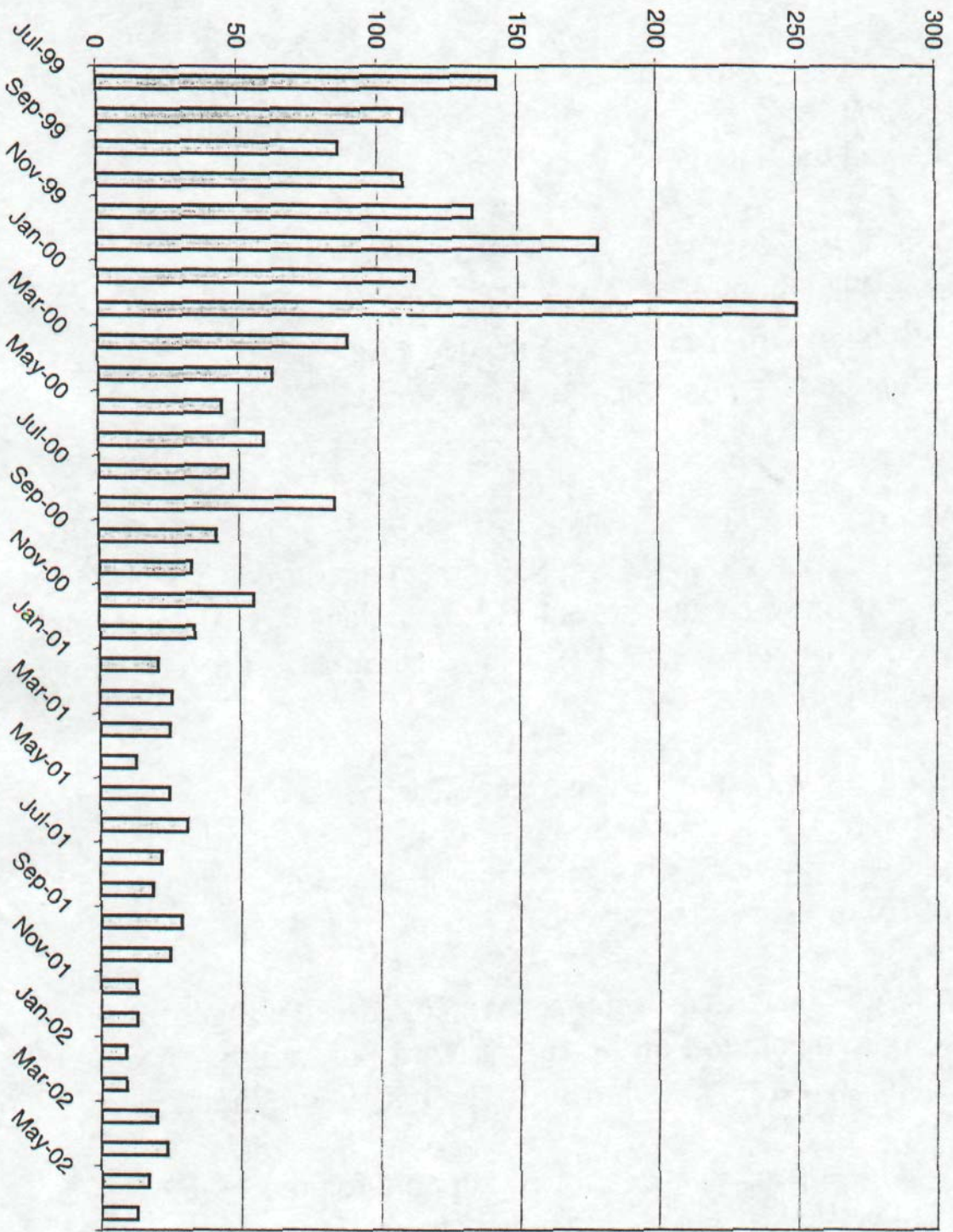
The drug and alcohol related offenses decrease, while still substantial, is not as great as the other measured categories. However, this may be due to enhanced vigilance on the part of staff for these offenses, and a lack of general disorder diverting staff from this vigilance.

During the measured 18 months of activation there were no acts of battery on staff, no batteries on inmates with weapons, no "mass actions," no work stoppages, and no lockdowns initiated as a result of Honor Yard Program misbehavior.

Although disciplinary actions have not ceased altogether, it is clear that implementation of the Honor Yard Program has resulted in a dramatically safer environment for both staff and inmates.

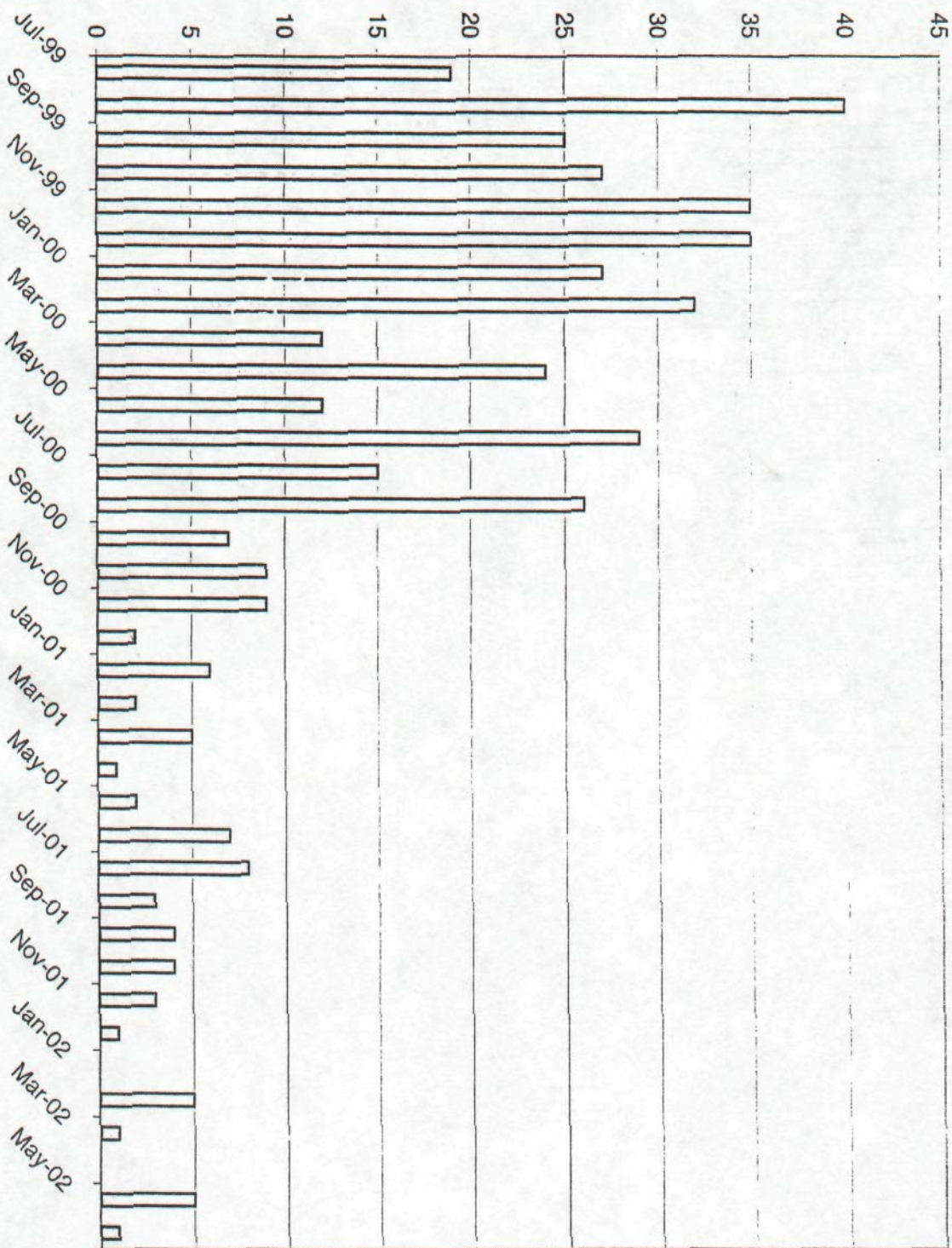
It would appear that continued support for the Honor Yard Program is justified by the results noted above.

TOTAL DISCIPLINARIES



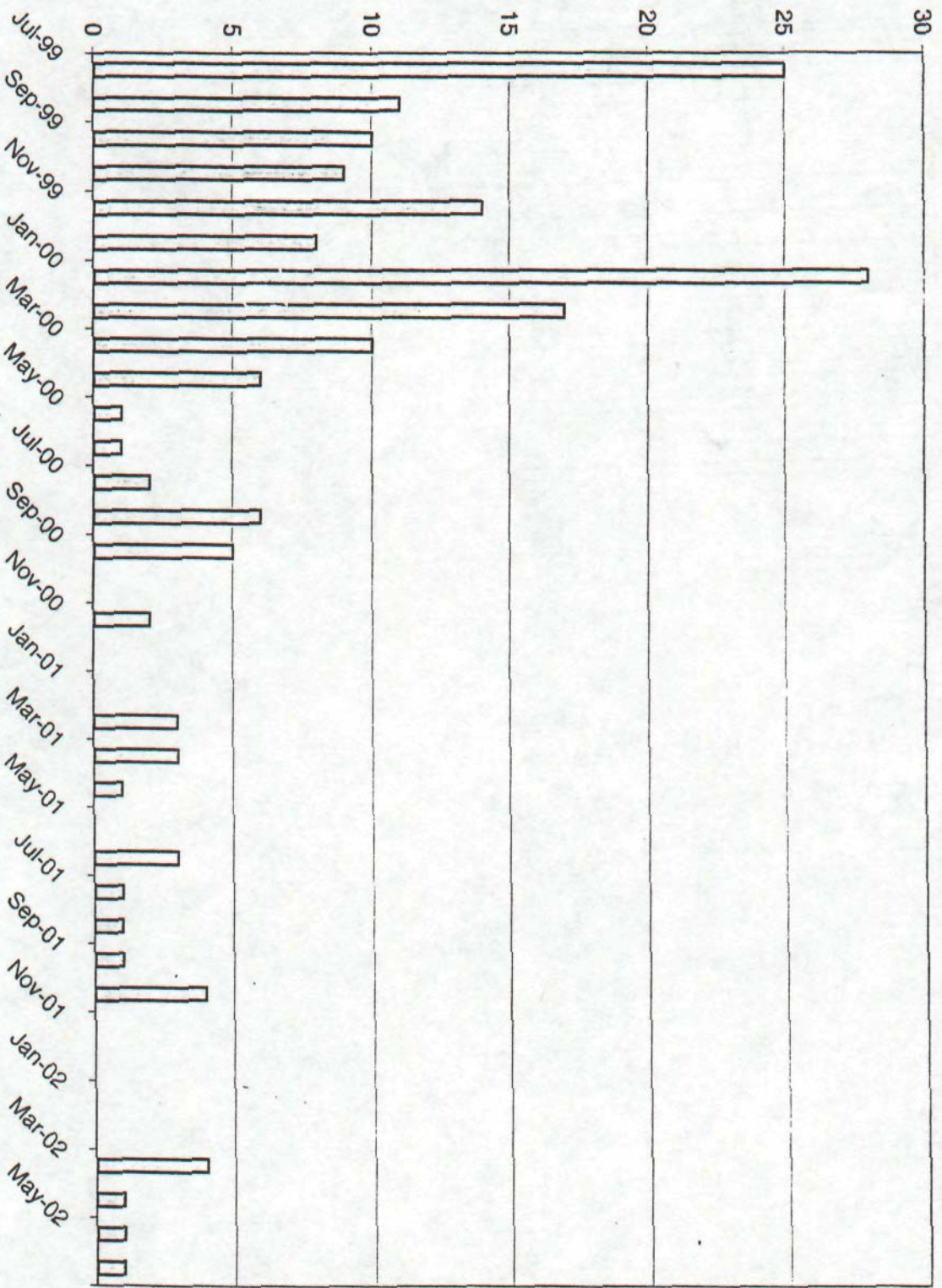
TOTAL DISCIPLINARIES

VIOLENCEWEAPONS



VIOLENCEWEAPONS

WORK RELATED



WORK RELATED

SUMMARY OF FACILITY-A DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

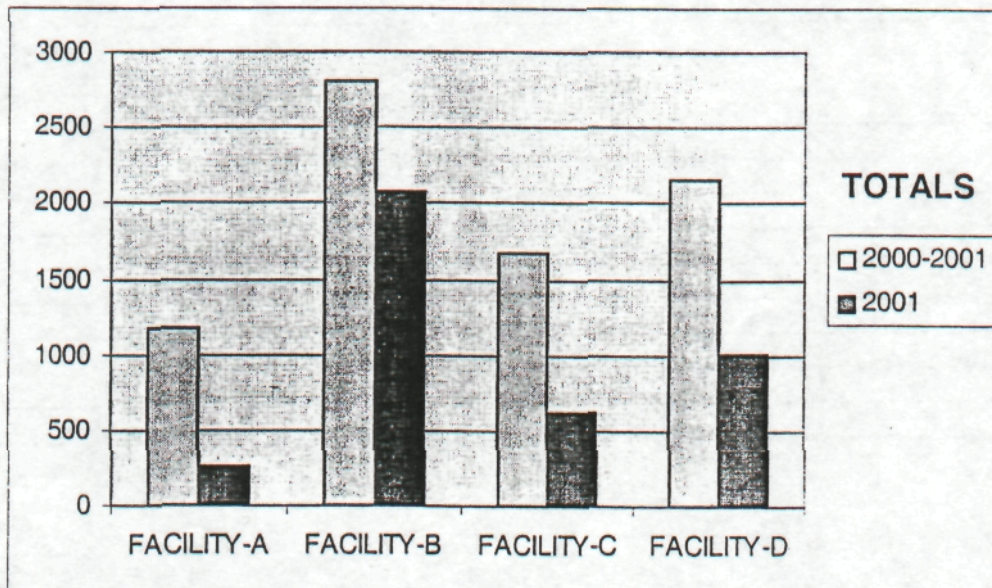
MONTH/YEAR	TOTAL DISCIPLINARIES	VIOLENCE/WEAPONS	WORK RELATED
Jul-99	143	19	25
Aug-99	109	40	11
Sep-99	86	25	10
Oct-99	109	27	9
Nov-99	134	35	14
Dec-99	179	35	8
Jan-00	113	27	28
Feb-00	250	32	17
Mar-00	89	12	10
Apr-00	62	24	6
May-00	44	12	1
Jun-00	59	29	1
Jul-00	46	15	2
Aug-00	84	26	6
Sep-00	42	7	5
Oct-00	33	9	0
Nov-00	55	9	2
Dec-00	34	2	0
Jan-01	21	6	0
Feb-01	26	2	3
Mar-01	25	5	3
Apr-01	13	1	1
May-01	25	2	0
Jun-01	31	7	3
Jul-01	22	8	1
Aug-01	19	3	1
Sep-01	29	4	1
Oct-01	25	4	4
Nov-01	13	3	0
Dec-01	13	1	0
Jan-02	9	0	0
Feb-02	9	5	0
Mar-02	20	1	4
Apr-02	24	0	1
May-02	17	5	1
Jun-02	13	1	1

SUMMARY OF CSP-LAC DISCIPLINARY HISTORY JANUARY 1, 2000 - DECEMBER 31, 2001

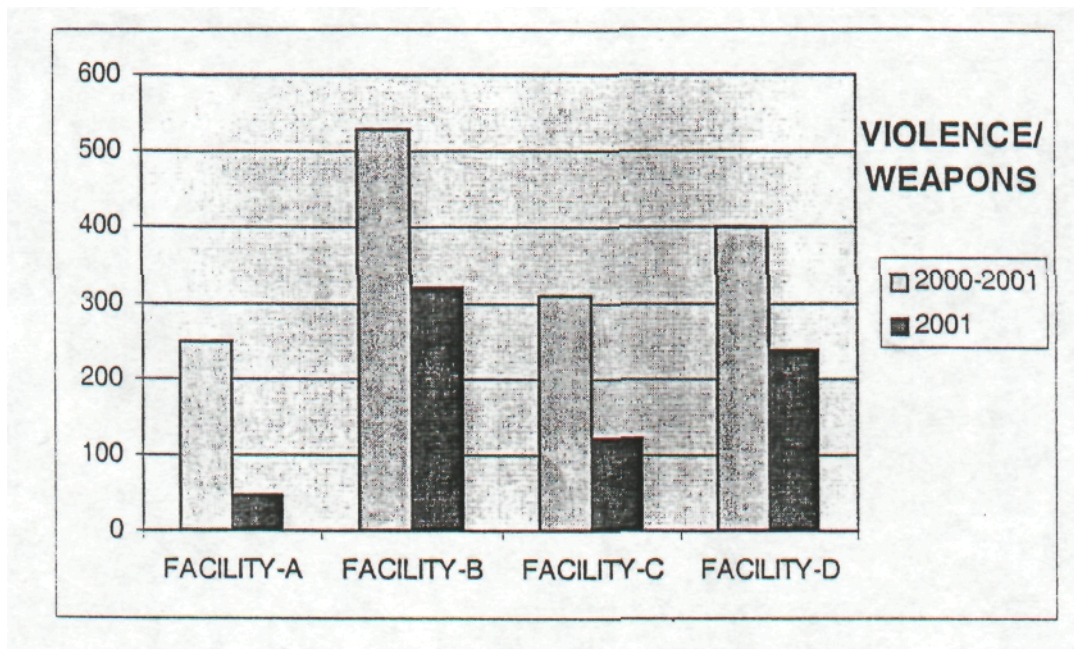
The following is a brief summary of the disciplinary history of CSP-LAC for the dates indicated.

Analysis was conducted of relevant disciplinary logs and other related unit documentation. For accurate comparison, all numbers have been pro-rated with Facility-A's three (3) general population housing units.

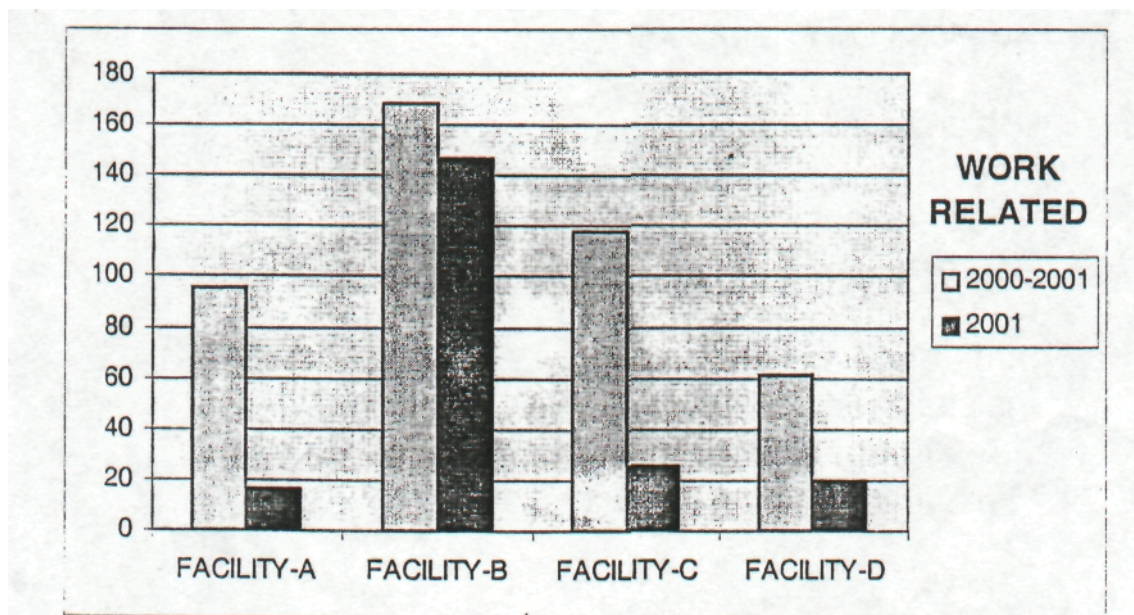
Graph 1 represents the total number of disciplinary reports generated on each facility during the relevant periods. It should be noted that 2001 is represented separately due to the fact that the Honor Program was not fully implemented until February of 2001:



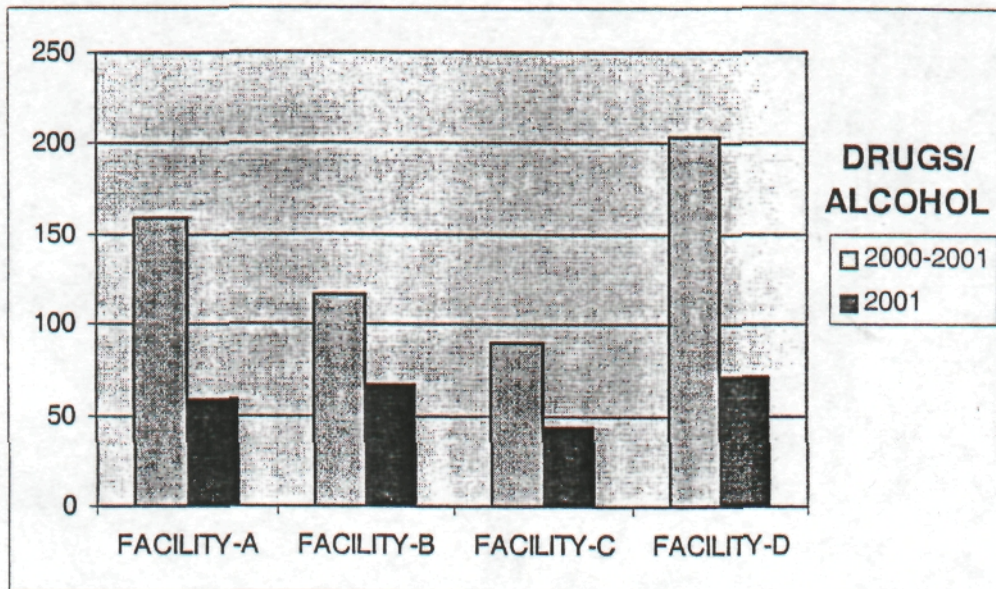
Graph 2 represents the pro-rated combined totals of disciplinarys with a guilty finding for violence, threatening violence and weapons possession:



Graph 3 reports the pro-rated total disciplinarys with a guilty finding for work related infractions:



Graph 4 reports the pro-rated total disciplinaries with a guilty finding for drug and alcohol offenses:



It should be noted that, utilizing an averaging of Facilities B, C and D's number of disciplinary reports we arrived at "expected numbers." Using this technique, the Honor Program showed the following decreases in disciplinary activity:

- 79% decrease in total disciplinaries
- 80% decrease in violence related disciplinaries
- 73% decrease in work related disciplinaries
- 3% decrease in drug and alcohol related disciplinaries

The drug and alcohol related decrease appears to be statistically insignificant. However, this may be due enhanced vigilance on the part of staff for these offenses, and a lack of general disorder diverting staff from this vigilance.

Additionally, after the Honor Program was implemented there were no acts of battery on staff, no battery on inmates with weapons, no work stoppages, nor mass actions or lock-downs initiated as a result of Honor Program misbehavior. Significant numbers of these types of disciplinary reports were generated on the other facilities during this time.

Although disciplinary actions have not ceased altogether, a review of these data indicates that the Honor Program has resulted in a dramatically safer environment for both staff and inmates. It would also seem apparent that along with this enhanced safety there are also significant cost benefits to the Honor Program.

Finally, the trends noted in this report have continued in the Honor Program.

SUMMARY OF DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

Facility-A

	Total Violence/Weapons	Work Related	Drugs/Alcohol	
Jan-00	113	27	28	10
Feb-00	250	32	17	3
Mar-00	89	12	10	17
Apr-00	62	24	6	4
May-00	44	12	1	11
Jun-00	59	29	1	2
Jul-00	46	15	2	3
Aug-00	84	26	6	10
Sep-00	42	7	5	3
Oct-00	33	9	0	8
Nov-00	55	9	2	17
Dec-00	34	2	0	12
Jan-01	21	6	0	5
Feb-01	26	2	3	9
Mar-01	25	5	3	8
Apr-01	13	1	1	4
May-01	25	2	0	7
Jun-01	31	7	3	4
Jul-01	22	8	1	3
Aug-01	19	3	1	2
Sep-01	29	4	1	7
Oct-01	25	4	4	4
Nov-01	13	3	0	2
Dec-01	13	1	0	4

SUMMARY OF DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

Facility-B

	Total	Violence/Weapons	Work Related	Drugs/Alcohol
Jan-00	32	8	0	1
Feb-00	31	13	2	3
Mar-00	51	10	1	12
Apr-00	39	16	0	0
May-00	41	26	0	1
Jun-00	50	26	0	4
Jul-00	44	23	1	3
Aug-00	71	39	1	6
Sep-00	58	20	4	6
Oct-00	54	28	4	7
Nov-00	121	45	7	2
Dec-00	150	20	12	19
Jan-01	122	39	13	7
Feb-01	143	32	10	4
Mar-01	183	26	45	8
Apr-01	149	28	14	11
May-01	150	23	37	9
Jun-01	55	20	2	4
Jul-01	77	19	0	1
Aug-01	126	35	8	5
Sep-01	94	26	21	2
Oct-01	301	39	37	20
Nov-01	185	68	3	7
Dec-01	483	74	2	10

SUMMARY OF DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

Facility-C

	Total Violence/Weapons	Work Related	Drugs/Alcohol	
Jan-00	50	27	7	1
Feb-00	55	17	8	6
Mar-00	84	20	14	10
Apr-00	76	26	4	13
May-00	69	14	8	4
Jun-00	83	24	10	6
Jul-00	76	16	6	4
Aug-00	169	46	48	4
Sep-00	106	48	18	2
Oct-00	59	22	7	5
Nov-00	73	31	12	4
Dec-00	150	20	12	11
Jan-01	25	8	1	7
Feb-01	35	18	0	3
Mar-01	51	24	9	12
Apr-01	18	9	0	1
May-01	115	19	0	2
Jun-01	29	10	1	0
Jul-01	50	19	2	3
Aug-01	52	14	6	7
Sep-01	59	11	12	9
Oct-01	63	25	6	7
Nov-01	60	27	1	10
Dec-01	62	20	4	14

SUMMARY OF DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

Facility-D

	Total	Violence/Weapons	Work Related	Drugs/Alcohol
Jan-00	78	37	6	12
Feb-00	137	39	8	29
Mar-00	92	28	7	16
Apr-00	97	29	5	14
May-00	74	3	2	22
Jun-00	81	9	5	15
Jul-00	137	30	7	31
Aug-00	75	12	3	11
Sep-00	83	26	13	2
Oct-00	99	15	6	18
Nov-00	98	14	3	37
Dec-00	92	27	2	15
Jan-01	65	28	5	15
Feb-01	225	144	0	10
Mar-01	50	11	1	11
Apr-01	49	12	2	7
May-01	48	22	1	5
Jun-01	68	26	2	10
Jul-01	38	8	0	3
Aug-01	84	32	9	10
Sep-01	52	20	0	5
Oct-01	74	13	8	13
Nov-01	55	15	4	9
Dec-01	200	66	2	18

REPORT OF COST SAVINGS RECOVERED FROM HONOR PROGRAM

The following is a summary of cost savings recovered as a result of decreased disciplinary reports and incidents due to Honor Program implementation at the California State Prison-Los Angeles County (CSP-LAC).

- **\$205,075.00 was saved by the Honor Program in CDC-115 related costs alone in 2001.**
- **\$62,500.00 will be saved by the Honor Program in projected CDC-837 related costs in 2003.**
- **\$300,000.00 will be saved by the Honor Program in projected disciplinary and incident related costs in 2003.**

Implementation of a single facility Honor Program to all eligible 270° Level-IV institutions and multi-facility Level-III institutions would result in an additional fourteen (14) Honor Program units. (CCC, CEN, COR, HDSP, ISP, NKSP, PVSP, RJD, SATF, SCC, SOL, SVSP, and WSP) Savings of \$4,200,000.00 should be recovered.

CONCLUSIONS

Experience demonstrates that disciplinary infractions drop off almost immediately upon implementation of the Honor Program. As noted in the *Honor Yard Program Progress* report (affixed) within thirty (30) days of announcement of the program disciplinary infractions dropped off by a considerable number. A reasonable expectation is a similar result would be experienced by any facility using the same criteria.

METHODOLOGY

Analysis was conducted of relevant disciplinary logbooks and the CSP-LAC Incident Logbook. For accurate comparison the numbers have been pro-rated to reflect the number of general population units on each facility.

Headquarters provided a rough breakdown of the hours incurred for the processing of a CDC-115, Rules Violation Report, based on a basic scenario that would result from a mutual combat involving two (2) inmates with no serious injuries. Needless to say, a substantial proportion of CDC-115 situations would result in a much greater utilization of staff time. The number reached was 13.5 hours, which has been rounded off to 13 hours, in the interest of simplification and conservatism.

The newest data available for comparison of CDC-115's stems from analysis of the 2001 disciplinary logbooks, as reported in the attached *Summary of CSP-LAC Disciplinary History*, prepared on December 6, 2002.

Utilizing these data, and the averaged hours for a CDC-115 to be processed (multiplied by \$25.00 an hour for the cost of staff time), a conclusion was reached that the Honor Program had 631 fewer disciplinary reports than would have been expected if Facility-A had been a normally functioning general population yard, saving the department roughly \$205,075.00 for the year 2001. It should be noted that the year 2002 continued to demonstrate substantially

fewer disciplinary reports within the Honor Program than would otherwise have been expected.

Similarly, an analysis was conducted regarding the time utilized for the preparation of a CDC-837, Crime/Incident Report, based on a basic scenario that would result from a mutual combat necessitating the use of force, with no serious injuries. Again, many CDC-837 packages would require a considerably greater amount of staff time. The number reached was 25 hours, in the interest of simplification and conservatism.

The 2003 CSP-LAC CDC-837 Logbook (1st Quarter 2003) was examined to develop data for comparison of Incident Packages. Applying the above hours figures, each CDC-837 costs the department a minimum of \$625.00. A conclusion was reached that the Honor Program will have 100 fewer Incident Reports than would be expected if Facility-A was a normally functioning general population yard, saving the department roughly \$62,500.00 for the year 2003.

A further cost savings, not calculated at this time, should be recovered from reduced CDC-602, Inmate Appeal Form, filings. Although analysis of this cost is more complicated, anecdotal evidence indicates that Honor Program participants have been filing fewer Inmate Appeals, thus reducing these costs as well.

Taking into account the ancillary costs of violent and disruptive behavior, including increased overtime, medical costs, staff turn-over as a result of "burn-out" and stress-related leave, and general

disruption of programming, the cost savings as a result of the Honor Program are much higher.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If the Honor Program was extended into all 270° Level-IV institutions and all multi-facility Level-III institutions, the cost savings would alleviate a substantial portion of the department's current budgetary crisis.

Finally, looking at the Honor Program concept as a long-term project, we believe that the percentage of inmates who would desire to participate will increase once the program becomes a permanent fixture of the department. The current ratio of three-to-one non-participation should reverse; resulting in greatly enhanced cost savings as each institution opens several Honor Program units. (A cost saving of close to 20 million dollars, simply in reduced disciplinary-related outlays, seems a conservative estimate.)

Appendix B:

Sample Honor Program Operational Procedure

SAMPLE HONOR PROGRAM OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

000.1

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

- A. The purpose of the Honor Program is to create a program environment, free from violence, illegal drugs, and disruptive behavior, in which personal and California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation goals can be more readily achieved.
- B. The Honor Program is defined as a voluntary context in which inmates commit themselves to eminent respect, to excellence, and to cooperation in the achievement of program goals, in cooperation with the assigned staff who work to facilitate the achievement of these goals, within the framework of existing rules, regulations, and procedures of the CDCR.
- C. Participation in the Honor Program requires a respect for its discipline. Participants and the assigned staff should be aware that:
 - 1. Every program requires discipline. A program is, in fact, a system of disciplines designed to channel personal (and collective) energies to achieve worthwhile goals.
 - 2. What characterizes the Honor Program is not the relaxation of discipline, but the consistent and voluntary embrace of a discipline so that certain collective and personal goals can be more effectively attained,
 - 3. The Honor Program requires participant inmates to be personally motivated to attain program objectives.
- D. The Honor Program functions as an iterative process, which can be successful only in the measure that its participants cooperate in its realization. These regulations are a framework for cooperation so that a mature program can develop.
- E. The Honor Program is potentially open to all General Population inmates, with the exception of Minimum Support Facility inmates and those with special needs status. Those who manifest a desire to participate, have the requisite disposition, and whose records in the CDCR provide indicators that they will comply with the Honor Program, will be designated as candidates.
- F. Facility-X is designated to exclusively house inmate participants in the Honor Program. The dedication of more housing units for the Program will be considered as the need arises.

000.2

REFERENCE A. Title 15

Section 3290 Testing of Controlled Substances

B. D.O.M.

Subsection 53030.6 Institution Social Services

Section 52010 Controlled Substances

Subsection 52080.5 Serious Rules Violations

C. Declaration of Goals of the CDCR

000.3

APPROVAL/REVIEW This document shall be reviewed at least annually by the Facility-X Captain, with the aid of the Unit Classification Committee and the Program Committee, under the supervision of the appropriate Associate Warden. The Warden shall approve continued use in its present form or with modifications.

000.4

RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The Facility Captain, under the direction of the appropriate Associate Warden, shall be responsible for the implementation, coordination, and development of the Honor Program.

B. Facility supervisor staff and the Unit Classification Committee (UCC) are exclusively responsible for endorsements to participate in the Honor Program.

C. A "Program Committee" will assist the Facility Captain in matters pertaining to non-custody program functioning.

D. The Facility Captain, in coordination with the appropriate Associate Warden(s), shall integrate a report on the Honor Program before the end of each fiscal year and submit it to the Warden with recommendations.

E. The appropriate Associate warden shall elaborate an annual report on the management (Captain, UCC, and Program Committee) of the Honor Program and submit it to the Warden with recommendations.

METHODS

A. Selection and Endorsement of Inmate Participants

1. To be considered for transfer to the Honor Program, an inmate must fulfill the following requirements:
 - a. Must have no active prison gang affiliation (member or associate);
 - b. Must not be designated “Sensitive Needs” status;
 - c. Must manifest disposition to program;
 - d. Must manifest willingness to program with inmates of any race;
 - e. Must have a record that indicates no serious CDC-115s (Divisions A-C) in the past five (5) years, and no work-related CDC-115s in the past three (3) years;
 - f. Must be drug-free;
 - g. Must not be on “C” status;
 - h. Must not be single-cell status;
 - i. Must apply for residency. (An integral part of the application form is a CDC-128-B Chrono stating willingness to conform to all the rules of the Honor Program – See Attachment A.)
2. A limited number of inmates from a Reception Center may be considered for direct placement to an Honor Program, even though requirements in the previous paragraph cannot be completely fulfilled. These shall be inmates who are considered especially capable of advancing the goals of the Honor Program, preferably through the exercise of some particular skill or aptitude through which they may be of assistance to other inmates in achieving worthwhile goals. Candidates from a Reception Center should present an essay with their application in which they describe the form in which they may be interviewed by the Facility Captain or his designee with this contribution in mind.
3. Any inmate who wishes to be considered for participation in the Honor Program should send an application package including the completed CDC-128-B/Application Chrono to the Honor Program Correctional Counselor-II (CC-II) or Captain.
4. Upon receipt, the Honor Program CC-II will review the Central File to verify eligibility and potentially interview the applicant. If considered to be appropriate the inmate will be given a drug test and can be moved to an Honor Program pending results of the test.
5. The Honor Program UCC will further evaluate the applicants once they arrive.

B. Individual Development Plan

1. Upon transfer to the Honor Program, the inmate shall:
 - a. Receive orientation from the Correctional Counselor-I and other staff (and assigned inmates where appropriate);
 - b. Elaborate an Individual Development Plan (IDP) within the first 30 days (See Attachment C) and present it, for to the UCC. For assistance in the elaboration of this personal plan, he may count on the assistance of any of the designated Inmate IDP Guides. (See below)
2. Given the importance of the IDP in providing a formal outline for the UCC to evaluate the participation of each inmate in the Honor Program, selected inmates will be designated as IDP Guides by the CC-II, with the function of mentoring other inmates in the elaboration of their IDP. At least one (1) IDP Guide should be fluent in Spanish.
3. To be considered for designation as an IDP Guide an Honor Program participant must:
 - a. Have participated in the Honor Program for at least one (1) year and have demonstrated the requisite characteristics of responsibility and leadership;
 - b. Have the needed literacy and human relations skills;
 - c. Have successfully completed the Life Skills workshop.
4. An IDP Guide is expected to:
 - a. Assist any inmate in the elaboration of his IDP, with special attention to setting realistic goals;
 - b. Spend considerable time and effort in assisting newly arrived inmates;
 - c. Be accountable for his own time and work product;
 - d. Maintain good working relations with staff and inmates;
 - e. Work directly for housing unit staff and advise them of his whereabouts at all times;
 - f. Assist counseling staff so that the completed documents are available prior to classification action.
5. Each IDP Guide must be willing to assist any other inmate. Honor Program participants may have specific needs tailored to a particular IDP Guide. Staff shall attempt to accommodate mentoring requests, which may require IDP Guides to enter housing units other than their own and/or sit on the yard with an inmate from another housing unit.

C. Enhancement of the Honor Program

1. Program participation is not optional in the Honor Program. All inmates must participate in a program, whether educational, vocational, work and/or personal development project. Personal projects, which are in lieu of Facility organized programs, must be approved and include revision criteria.
2. Staff assigned to the Honor Program will evaluate the programs for which they are responsible, with particular attention being paid to the measure in which such programs are geared to facilitate the goals of the Honor Program. Proposals for modification or enhancement should be presented to the Program Committee, together with recommendations for revised rules and regulations where deemed necessary.
3. Work positions should also be revised to guarantee sufficient workload, challenge, and incentive, and new ones anticipated for creation in the measure that program enhancement proposals warrant them.
4. The program on the Honor Program Facility will be enhanced through the elaboration, review, approval, and implementation of new program proposals.
5. Active Participation of the resident inmates is expected, and indeed, indispensable, for the conception, development, and implementation of program enhancements.
6. Priority will be given to ongoing human development activities – courses, seminars, invited speakers, formalized support groups.

D. Inmate Attitudes and Discipline

1. The “honor attitude,” required by the Honor Program, is reflected in the following statement: I have realistically evaluated the restraints and limitations of prison life and I have decided to strive to attain certain goals during my prison time – things I will be proud to have achieved. So, I choose to cooperate in the promotion and maintenance of a human environment in which the attainment of these goals is possible for myself and for others, and I have decided to be personally responsible for using the available opportunities to achieve my goals.”

2. Inmate respect for prison procedures, rules, and regulations, is essential for the smooth implementation of the Honor Program. For this reason, violations will not be tolerated and serious violations will have immediate and severe consequences, including possible removal from the Facility.
3. Key to the Honor Program is the successful maintenance of an atmosphere of respect. For this reason, disruptive, or antisocial behavior will result in disciplinary action and, if serious or recalcitrant, possible removal from the Honor Program.
4. Resident inmates are encouraged to assume a proactive role in the ongoing prevention and resolution of conflict and in the promotion of attitudes of respect, cooperation, and good will.
5. Inmates who manifest unwillingness to program, or whose conduct disrupts the program, will be issued a CDC-115 and possible removal from the Honor Program, and may not reapply for the Program for a period specified by the UCC.
6. Honor Program inmates shall not knowingly promote or assist any gang. They shall not wear sagging pants nor display gang colors or slogans.
7. Considering that drug use is a major source of program disruption, a no-tolerance policy shall be in effect in the Honor Program. Enforcement includes (but is not limited to):
 - a. Routine random testing of inmates, following a systematized Controlled Substance Testing Procedure;
 - b. Staff inspections;
 - c. Occasional and unscheduled use of canine units.
8. Inmates shall normally be removed from the Honor Program, if deemed detrimental to the success of the Honor Program, by receipt of:
 - a. Division A-C Serious CDC-115
 - b. Drug-related or alcohol-related CDC-115
 - c. Work-related CDC-115
9. Other rules violations will be reviewed by the UCC, which may grant a 30 to 90 day trial period for corrective action before considering removal from the Facility.
10. Inmates may request and be granted a non-disciplinary removal from the Honor Program as long as no CDC-115 is pending.

E. Program Committee

1. The purpose of the Program Committee is to foster the development and improvement of programs, and cooperation among all the programs which to the Honor Program Facility.
2. The following shall be functions of the Program Committee:
 - a. Promotion of Program improvements;
 - b. Integration of enhancement proposals;
 - c. Initial approval of program modifications;
 - d. Facilitation of cooperation among different program components;
 - e. Integration of an annual report on the Honor Program.
3. The Facility Captain, CC-II, and five (5) Warden appointees will be members of the committee. The Captain will chair the committee. The Program Committee shall meet monthly and minutes shall be kept.
4. Non-members, staff and/or inmates, may be invited to participate in particular Committee sessions.
5. All Honor Program modification proposals shall be reviewed and approved by the Program Committee before being presented for the approval of higher institution authorities.

F. Unit Classification Committee

1. Considering the key importance of the classification process for the Honor Program, the UCC is expected to be especially thorough in the process of determining the suitability of candidates, exercise due diligence in monitoring the participation of resident inmates, and firmly exercise its function of guaranteeing adherence to the rules of the Honor Program.
2. The authorization of inmates to participate in the Honor Program is the exclusive responsibility of the Honor Program UCC, presided over by Captain. (See Section IV.A: Selection and Endorsement of Inmate Participants.)
3. Given the importance of individual program and motivation in the Honor Program, the annual UCC hearings shall pay special attention to each inmate's individual plan (IDP). UCC should verify that each participant has an approved plan, evaluate the inmate's progress in achieving the objectives of this plan, and approve updates and changes.

4. The UCC shall not hesitate to remove from the Honor Program any inmate who displays behavior in conflict with the purpose and tenor of the Program. (See Section II: Purpose and Objectives.)
5. Successful programming in the Honor Program will result in the issuance of a CDC-128-B Laudatory Chrono annually at, or immediately following, the UCC. (See Attachment B.)

G. Staff Expectations

1. Staff assigned to the Honor Program are encouraged to excel in support for the Program and its objectives, and to proceed with the utmost professionalism, both in their relations with their peers and with the resident inmates.
2. Assigned staff are encouraged to assume a proactive role in the ongoing prevention and resolution of conflict, and in the promotion of attitudes of respect, cooperation, and good will.
3. All staff will have a broad and active role in the conception, implementation, and facilitation of expanded program activities.
4. All staff should be aware of the paramount importance of teamwork for the success of the Honor Program, and commit to cooperation and mutual support.
5. Staff assigned to the Honor Program will receive special orientation and additional training.

Attachments

- A. CDC-128-B/Application Form
- B. CDC-128-B/Laudatory Chrono sample
- C. IDP Form (front and reverse)

Warden

Date

NAME and NUMBER

This CDC 128-B will serve as an application, commitment and endorsement for inmate _____, # _____ to the Honor Program. The honor attitude required by the Program, is reflected in the following statement:

"I have realistically evaluated the restrains and limitations of prison life and I have decided to strive to attain certain goals during my prison time—things I will be proud to have achieved. So, I chose to cooperate in the promotion and maintenance of a human environment in which the attainment of these goals is possible for myself and for others, and I have decided to be personally responsible for using the available opportunities to achieve my goals."

Per CCR. 3290,©(2), A random drug test will be conducted, "When mandatory random testing is known to the inmate to be a condition of the inmate's participation in a specific program, assignment or activity." Random drug testing will be an expectation to participation in the Honor Program.

My signature on this chrono assures that I am willing to participate in all facets of the Honor Program and commit to improve myself and the program.

Inmate Signature and Date

Staff Witness Signature and Date

Cc: Inmate

Central File

Date:

California State Prison

Traduccion Espanola

Esta CDC 128-B servira como solicitud, compromiso y recomendacion para la participaci6n del interno (inmate) en el "Honor Program." El "actitud de honor" que el *Honor Program* require, se refleja en la siguiente afirmaci6n:

"He evaluado realisticamente las resticciones y las limitaciones de la vida de encarcelado y he decidido luchar por el logro de ciertas metas durante mi estancia en la carcel—logros que en el future serian otivo de un legJtimo orgullo. Por tanto, opto por la colaboraci6n con otros para promover y sostener un ambiente humano en el que el logro de tales metas sea posible, tanto para mi como para otros, y me comprometo a ser personalmente responsable por el aprobeehamiento de las oportunidades que se ofrezcan para el logro de mis objetivos."

De acuerdo con CCR. 3290,©(2), una prueba aleatoria (random) de drogas se requerira "cuando el interno sabe que tal requerimiento es condicion para la participation en un programa, trabajo o actividad determinada." Las pruebas aleatorias du uso de drogas son una condici6n para la participaci6n en el *Honor Program*.

Firmas del interno y de un miembro del personal que avala la petition.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
for Honor-Program inmates

NAME	CDC #	Housing
D.O.B.	Ethnicity	Primary Language

Long Term Goals

Short Term Objectives (for one year)	Plans for Achieving Objectives (specific methods by which the inmate will work toward the achievement of the objectives)
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Accommodations	Additional Comments
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Distribution:
C-File (original)
CC-I
Supervisors/Instructors (each)
Inmate

Signatures:

Inmate _____	CC-I _____
Supervisor / Instructor _____	UCC / Captain _____

Revisions (Include authorized modifications, comments, dates and signatures of approval)

UCC Annual Review

Signature: UCC /
Captain _____

Appendix C:

Sample Title 15 Change

SAMPLE CHANGE TO CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 15, SECTIONS
3375.1 & 3375.2 “HONOR PROGRAM”

In the following, underlining indicates proposed text and
strikethrough indicates deleted text.

3375.1. Inmate Placement.

(a) Except as provided in section 3375.2, each inmate shall be assigned to a facility with a security level, which corresponds, to the following placement score ranges:

(1) An inmate with a placement score of 0 through 18 shall be placed in a Level I facility.

(2) An inmate with a placement score of 19 through 27 shall be placed in a Level II facility.

(3) An inmate with a placement score of 28 through 51 shall be placed in a Level III facility.

(4) An inmate with a placement score of 52 and above shall be placed in a Level IV facility.

(b) An inmate approved for transfer to a subfacility of a complex may be received and processed through a facility with a security level higher than that which is consistent with the inmate's placement score. Such cases shall be transferred to the subfacility when bed space allows or, when appropriate, recommended for an administrative determinant, which prohibits movement to the lower security level facility.

(1) The case shall be presented to a CSR for evaluation within 30 days of receipt at the facility unless the inmate is on an approved waiting list maintained by the complex for placement of inmates at the approved subfacility.

(2) The transfer of an inmate for more than 30 days from one subfacility of a complex to another subfacility, which has a different security level, shall require a classification staff representative (CSR) endorsement. When the subfacility's security level is consistent with the inmate's placement score, the classification and parole representative may act as a CSR.

(c) An inmate who meets the following set of criteria may be housed in a designated “Honor Program,” contingent upon bed space availability and written request by the inmate. An inmate whose case is designated Honor Program qualified shall be noted by an administrative determinant (HON) as specified at section 3375.2(b)(12). The relevant criteria for Honor Program placement are as follows:

(1) Must have no active prison gang affiliation (member or associate);

(2) Must not be designated sensitive needs yard qualified;

(3) Must manifest disposition to program;

(4) Must manifest willingness to program with inmates of any race;

(5) Must have a record that includes no serious rules violation reports (Divisions A-C) in the past five (5) years, and no work-related rules violation reports in the past three (3) years;

(6) Must be drug-free and agree to random drug testing;

(7) Must not be single-cell status;

(8) Must apply in writing.

An inmate who is determined to be qualified for Honor Program placement shall be placed on a master list maintained by Classification Services Unit staff. Honor Program facilities shall be established based on the number of qualified inmates on the master list, as soon as feasible, consistent with their placement scores.

3375.2. Administrative Determinants.

(a) An inmate meeting one or more of the following administrative or irregular placement conditions, known as administrative determinants, may be housed in a facility with a security level which is not consistent with the inmate's placement score:

(1) An inmate requires an outpatient or higher degree of medical or psychiatric care at a facility specifically staffed for the type of treatment necessary.

(2) An inmate with a history of sex crimes designated in section 3377.1(b) shall not be housed in a Level I facility without perimeter gun towers nor shall they be assigned to a program or work detail outside any security perimeter unless under constant and direct supervision.

(3) An inmate with a history of arson shall not be housed in a facility constructed primarily of wood.

(4) An inmate with a felony hold, warrant, detainer, or the equivalent thereof filed with the department who is likely to receive a significant period of consecutive incarceration or be deported, shall not be housed in a Level I facility without perimeter gun towers.

(5) An inmate requires confidential placement in a city or county confinement facility within the state.

(6) An inmate serving a sentence of life without possibility of parole shall not be housed in a facility with a security level lower than Level IV, except when authorized by the Departmental Review Board.

(7) An inmate serving any life term shall not be housed in a Level I or II facility if any of the following case factors are present:

(A) The commitment offense involved multiple murders, unusual violence or execution-type murders or received high notoriety.

(B) A history of multiple walkaways, an escape from a secure perimeter or an escape with force or threat of force.

(8) An inmate serving a life term without an established parole date of three years or less, shall not be housed in a Level I facility nor assigned to a program outside a security perimeter.

(9) An inmate serving a life term whose placement score is not consistent with a Level I or II security level shall not be housed in a Level I or Level II facility except when approved by the Departmental Review Board.

(10) An inmate whose death sentence is commuted or modified shall be transferred to a reception center for processing after which the Departmental Review Board shall determine the inmate's initial facility placement.

(b) The following three-letter codes are used to indicate those administrative or irregular placement conditions known as administrative determinants, which may be imposed by departmental officials to override the placement of an inmate at a facility according to his/her placement score.

(1) AGE. Inmate's youthfulness, immaturity or advanced age.

(2) ARS. Current, prior conviction, or a sustained juvenile adjudication, as defined in subdivision (b)(25), for arson.

(3) BEH. Inmate's record of behavior indicates they are capable of successful placement at a facility with a security level lower than that which is consistent with his/her placement score. This factor shall not be used for an inmate who is currently housed at a facility with a security level higher than that which is consistent with his/her placement score.

(4) CAM. Placement is recommended due to a shortage of camp qualified inmates.

(5) DEA. Inmate was formerly or is currently sentenced to death.

(6) DEP. Special placement ordered by the Departmental Review Board.

(7) DIS. Inmate's disciplinary record indicates a history of serious problems or threatens the security of the facility.

(8) ENE. Inmate has one or more enemies under the department's jurisdiction which have been documented on a CDC Form 812 (Rev. 8/01), Notice of Critical Case Information--Safety of Persons or on a CDC Form 812-C (Rev. 8/01), Notice of Critical Information—Confidential Enemies pursuant to section 3378. This should also be used when it is probable that the inmate may be victimized due to case factors; e.g., the nature of their offense is likely to create an enemy situation at certain facilities, current Protective Housing Unit case, and those who are natural victims because of their appearance.

(9) ESC. Unusual circumstances suggest the inmate is a much greater escape risk than indicated by his/her placement score; e.g., the inmate verbalized an intent to escape.

(10) FAM. Inmate has strong family ties to a particular area where other placement would cause an unusual hardship.

(11) GAN. Documentation establishes that the inmate's gang membership or association requires special attention or placement consideration.

(12) HON. Inmate meets the criteria set forth at section 3375.1(c) for placement in an Honor Program facility and has requested such placement.

~~(12)~~ (13) INA. Documentation establishes that the inmate's inactive gang status requires special attention or placement consideration.

~~(13)~~ (14) HOL. Hold, warrant or detainer is likely to be exercised.

~~(14)~~ (15) LIF. Inmate is serving a life sentence and requires placement in a facility with a security level higher than that indicated by his/her placement score.

~~(15)~~ (16) MED. Inmate's medical condition requires treatment or continuing medical attention not available at all facilities.

~~(16)~~ (17) OUT. Inmate requires placement at a specific facility for an out-to-court appearance. This factor shall also be used when a releasing authority appearance is nearing.

~~(17)~~ (18) POP. Shall be used only by a CSR to indicate that no beds presently exist at a facility with a security level that is consistent with the inmate's placement score.

~~(18)~~ (19) PRE. The short time remaining to serve limits or otherwise influences placement or program options for the inmate. This factor shall also be used for sending an inmate to a hub facility for their release to a community based correctional facility.

~~(19)~~ (20) PSY. Inmate's psychological condition requires special treatment or may severely limit placement options. This factor shall also be used for those inmates who are designated as Category B.

~~(20)~~ (21) PUB. High notoriety of an inmate has caused public interest in the case and requires exceptional placement.

~~(21)~~ (22) SCH. Inmate is involved in an academic program, which is not available at a facility with a security level that is consistent with his/her placement score.

~~(22)~~ (23) SEX. Inmate has a prior incidence of rape, oral copulation, sodomy, or a lewd and lascivious act, which requires restricted custody or placement.

~~(23)~~ (24) SOR. Inmate's bisexual or homosexual orientation may require special placement.

~~(24)~~ (25) TIM. Inmate's time to serve is long, requiring placement at a facility with a security level higher than that, which is consistent with his/her placement score.

~~(25)~~ (26) VIO. Inmate has a current or prior conviction for a violent felony, or a sustained juvenile adjudication including, but not limited to, those listed under Penal Code section 667.5(c), which, as determined by the CSR, requires placement in a facility with a higher security level than that indicated by his/her placement score.

(A) For the purposes of this subdivision, a "sustained juvenile adjudication" means a guilty determination or ruling rendered in a juvenile judicial proceeding.

(B) The following administrative determinations regarding allegations of violent acts, including but not limited to those offenses described in Penal Code section 667.5(c), shall have the same

force and effect as a current or prior conviction for a violent felony or a sustained juvenile adjudication:

1. Board of Prison Terms or Parole Hearings Division good cause finding, or;

2. California Youth Authority / Youthful Offender Parole Board sustained allegation

(C) A probation violation finding in a court of law involving, but not limited to those offenses described in Penal Code section 667.5(c), shall have the same force and effect as a current or prior conviction in a court of law for a violent felony,

~~(26)~~ (27) VOC. Inmate is involved in a vocational program, which is not available at a facility with a security level, which is consistent with the inmate's placement score.

~~(27)~~ (28) WOR. Inmate has a work skill in a critical trade, which warrants special placement consideration.